RECOLLECTIONS

OF

LITERARY CHARACTERS,

ETC.

VOL. I.

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RECOLLECTIONS

OF

LITERARY CHARACTERS

AND

CELEBRATED PLACES.

BY

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AUTHOR OF

"MEMOIRS OF THE COURT OF HENRY VIII.;" "THE CORRESPONDENCE OF SARAH, DUCHESS OF MARLBOROUGH;" ETC.

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PREFACE.

This work was written many years ago, and is now published with the belief that the interest which the subjects of it seemed to excite when they first appeared, has not yet passed away.*

In venturing to offer, from my own personal knowledge, reminiscences of some of the departed literati of England, I wrote under the appellation of "a middle-aged man," in order that, by better disguising myself, I might at that time express myself the more unreservedly. I give these recollections as they were originally printed; and am confident, that whilst there may be many who may differ from me in my

* Some of them appeared originally in "Bentley's Miscellany" and "Fraser's Magazine."

opinions and predilections, there will be no one who can reproach me with a harsh or unjust expression towards those who are beyond the reach of human sympathy.

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CONTENTS

OF

THE FIRST VOLUME.

CHAP. VII.

CHAP. VIII.

CHAP. IX.



RECOLLECTIONS

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CHAPTER I.

DR. MAGINN.

Before I close my desk, as I sit in my moonlit chamber this fine summer evening, let me recall one, now at rest,—slightly known to me, indeed, but remembered with a fearful distinctness—*so* slightly, that if you were to ask me his Christian name I could not tell it. A clear remembrance of his blanched cheek and wandering eye dwells in my memory. Who, when I add the faltering voice, the symmetrical features, the grey hair, even in comparative youth,—the slashing reply, the sweet, good-natured smile,—who will not recall the name of Dr. Maginn?

I saw him one evening—how well I remember it! and with what throes and throbs the remembrance is

even now recalled!—yes, even now. It was in an evening party where—but what am *I*, an old man (to-night in one of my low-spirited seasons), that I should aim at exciting the interest of the bright-eyed, blooming creatures who may bend over this page, perhaps as the travelling-carriage carries them far from London and distraction, to read the newspaper to papa, maybe, in some country parsonage, or to listen to the recital of Brother Tom's first essay in hunting and shooting, or to be the hand-maiden of mamma's charities, or the happy representative of Aunt Bountiful at the Sunday-school.

To return to Dr. Maginn; and for an instant mingle with the thoughts of him the recollections still dear to this elderly heart.

It was a low, long, narrow room through which I made my way into the throng of a party. That gentle confusion prevailed which shows that all is "going off" well. That Trophonius's-cave look which we sometimes see on the faces of those who are coming out as you go in, and which appears to proclaim that they are never to smile again, was not to be observed; and yet there was no singing, no dancing, no charades—and yet,—it was an assemblage known by the name of a literary côterie.

I made my way into the very thick of the throng; elbowed a poetess to the right, trod upon the slipper of a lady historian, touched the saintly shoulder of some Charlotte Elizabeth of the day, and more formidable than all, brushed, maybe, the sacred dust off

the sleeve of a reviewer. All were standing, all were listening to some one who sat in the middle of a group; a low-seated man, short in stature, was uttering pleasantries, and scattering witticism about him, with the careless glee of his country — this was Maginn. His articulation was impeded by a stutter, yet the sentences which he stammered forth were brilliant repartees, uttered without sharpness, and edged rather with humour than with satire. His countenance was rather agreeable than striking; its expression sweet, rather than bright. The grey hair, coming straight over his forehead, gave a singular appearance to a face still bearing the attributes of youth. He was thirty or thereabouts (yes, saucy niece of mine, thirty *is* still young); but his thoughtful brow, his hair, the paleness of his complexion, gave him many of the attributes of age. I am, however, a firm believer in the axiom, that age can never be concealed upon a careful inspection — we may look older than we are, but we rarely, alas! look younger. True, the first impression may deceive; but there is always some line, some tell-tale change somewhere, which betrays the ugly truth. I looked on for a moment, as the crew of authors, reviewers, playwrights, and novel-weavers paid homage to Dr. Maginn. He was then in the zenith of his glory — the glory which radiated from "John Bull" or sent forth a rich stream of light from the pages of "Fraser." His conversation was careless and offhand, and, but for the impediment of speech, would have had the charm of a rich comedy. His choice of words was such as I have

rarely met with in any of *my* contemporaries; for, indeed, in my day it has become the vogue to corrupt English in many ways, to bring down your subject by homely, if not coarse phrases, and to neglect all those adjuncts to reasoning and to wit which a true use of our language affords.

I passed on, the circle closed around Maginn, and that evening I saw him no more. Henceforth his career was a bright and perilous one, exercising a considerable, though ephemeral influence on the age in which he lived. No modern writer in periodicals has ever given to satire a less repulsive form of personality. No private venom seemed to direct the powerful pen which spared not affectation, and lashed presumption till she bled to death. Why are not his essays collected? What holds them back from an expectant public? He wrote when our periodical literature was in its zenith; —yet he bore away the palm; and his clear, firm hand might be discerned amid a host of inferior writers. There was no mistaking that emphatic, pure, and stately English of his.

The next time I saw this ill-starred son of genius was in a friend's house, very early one morning, as Dr. Maginn was going away to France. He and I were for some minutes alone in a room together. It was a dingy, London morning, and the room corresponded to the day—a lodging-house room. It was not dirty, to speak individually; but a general air of antiquity, of long-established dustiness, of confirmed, ingrained, never-to-be-effaced uncleanliness sat upon

every article in the apartment, even to the top of the bell-ropes. The fire was not lighted—it was September; the window was open sufficiently to chill the susceptible frame of Maginn as he paced to and fro, never looking towards me, waiting for our common friend. I shut the window. He looked towards me for an instant, stammered out a "Thank you." His face was then of a leaden, ashy hue; his grey hair had become thin; his dress—but why expatiate upon *that;*—yet it looked sorrowful, and shattered, like its wearer, and *I* fancied it meant much.

Our friend came into the room. I heard Maginn say, "I am going out of town;" and even those few words sounded ominous in my presaging mind. Sorrow, sickness, weariness of spirit, embarrassed circumstances, and a mournful list of etceteras, suggested themselves to me as the cause. I ran down the dingy stairs with a mournful conviction that Adversity, with her rapid strides, had overtaken poor Maginn—and I was not wrong; perhaps he provoked the beldame (whom Gray chooses to apostrophise as a nurse) to follow him; and follow him she did—to his grave.

I got into the street—what a sensible difference in the atmosphere. How well De Balzac, in his "Père Goriot," describes the atmosphere of a boarding-house—that ineffable, unventilated atmosphere. After enumerating all its compound attributes, how admirably he finishes the description, by saying it is impossible to sum it up!—it is—it is, in fact, the boarding-house atmosphere, and he cannot say more.

The lodging-house left much the same conviction on my mind — that no one could describe the sensations which are produced by its peculiar atmosphere. By the way, how is it that in London there are no good lodgings to be had? Nothing on a good system— everything so dirty, so faded, so dear — everybody so imposing, such wretched lodging-house looks, such infamous little boys to wait at the street door, such drabs of housemaids, beds which one loathes, sofas which soil one's pantaloons, carpets old in the sin of dirt, and windows which you may look through if you can. In winter a tea-spoonful of coal in your fire-place; in summer a baking hot atmosphere; no ventilation. Why are we so far behind all other places for the season (for London is now little else than a great watering-place, without mineral springs) in these essential comforts?

Says a friend to me one day, "Come and meet Maginn; there shall be none save him, our own family, and yourself. You will see him to advantage." Two years had passed since I had seen Maginn. Time, which ambles withal to many, had galloped with him. His grey hair was now very thin, and scattered over an anxious brow; the sweet mildness of his eye was gone, his speech was more faltering than ever; many moments elapsed before he could begin a word, for natural defect was heightened by nervous debility, and the approach of his last fatal disease. Still, broken up, impaired as he was, there were genuine bursts of humour, a scholar-like nicety of expression; above all,

a humbled, and perhaps chastened spirit was apparent. We had a day of talk of the sterling and standard writers of England; themes fitted for the Augustan age flowed freely. Swift was, perhaps, the model of Maginn, certainly he was the object of his great admiration; and, as he aptly quoted him, true Irish humour played upon the features of the modern satirist.

It was not long since the town had rung with conversation respecting the famous article in "Fraser"—the demolition of a certain aristocratic author—the unmanly and brutal revenge upon the most amiable of booksellers—the trial—the duel between Maginn and the assailant—the slow and cruel death of the beaten and affrighted publisher—the immunity which the offender had enjoyed—for fashion had lent her shield to the votary. I did then consider, and I still do consider, Maginn's article on the work in question one of his strongest and his best; strong, because hatred of vice lent it power; good, because written from the impulse of a mind which, however sullied by excess, was originally high-toned and fearless. Of course I abstained scrupulously from the subject, and was surprised at the readiness with which Maginn entered into it. He gave me the whole history of the duel from first to last; spoke of the gentlemanly bearing of his antagonist, and seemed to me to take an absolute pleasure in recounting the whole. But when he touched upon the sufferings of the injured and innocent publisher, his lip quivered, his frame writhed, a tear

dimmed his eye, he walked hastily to and fro, and, when he returned to his seat, spoke of the subject no more. I longed to glean more from him; to gather up his real opinions of men and things; to draw him forth from the mask which the periodical writer must needs wear; to enjoy the true sentiment which lay beneath the satire, like sweet crushed water-plants beneath the ice. But the limits of a London party are all too short, and tea came, and eleven o'clock came, and I rushed into the street, thence to mingle among many who would repudiate me if they thought I had any of the contamination of literature about me.

I saw Maginn no more. I was not surprised when I learned that slow disease had wasted his limbs and brought him to the brink of the grave, but had left his intellect bright and clear to the last. That was a wonderful mind which could stand the wear and tear to which poor Maginn subjected it. His last thoughts, as they are recorded, were of literature and of Homer. May we not hope that the pure ray of reason thus spared, was ofttimes, perhaps in the silence of the sleepless night, employed in holy and hopeful reflections—that the things of *this* life had a fitful and partial influence over his spirit—that the solemn expectation of eternity had the noblest and the greatest share of that mind, so vigorous in its close?

When I review, in my own study, the different literary circles which I have seen, I admire the contrast between my setting out and the end of my journey as a pedestrian through the walks of life. I marvel at the

various phases which the polite world has assumed, as it has shone upon me; the various aspects which certain cliques of men, all following the same pursuits, have worn. How like a dream it now seems, to suppose Maginn the soul and centre of a certain circle, who hung upon his applause, and adulated his talents! And now, how the memory of his brief, feverish existence has passed away, revived only by the accents of compassion, or adduced to "point a moral." To "adorn a tale" he never was intended. How completely was his fame limited to a certain circle! how un-English was his reputation! how non-European his celebrity! The circle that surrounded him is gradually melting away; it is broken up; one by one the leaves of the book have been snatched out by death: the ears that listened to him are even already dulled; the eyes which gazed on him are closed in death. The very bookseller who suffered for his aggression upon the literary merits of Mr. Grantley Berkeley has sunk, after slow disease, to an untimely grave. Men of letters, in the present day, live fast: the words of the Psalmist, applicable to all, to them are peculiarly appropriate. As soon as they arrive at their zenith, so soon does the canker-worm of disease undermine the root, and poison the sap that nourishes the tree: they pass away, to borrow from the sublimest of all human writers, "even as a sleep; they fade away suddenly like grass."

When last I saw Maginn, there gazed upon his soft but restless eye, there hung upon his words, a pale young man, himself a genius of the purest ray, admiring

the genius of another. I knew him not; his manner was unobtrusive; the circle who stood around Maginn had scarcely heard his name. He stood behind in a retired part of the room. Unseen, he went away — no one missed him. No one alluded to the young Irishman: the name of Gerald Griffin was not so much as uttered in that noisy chamber. As he passed me, the grave and melancholy aspect, the lean form, and anxious countenance arrested my attention; but still I was not sufficiently interested to inquire his name.

Not long afterwards I undertook, upon the recommendation of a short encomium in "The Edinburgh Review," to read "The Collegians." It is among the most powerful of the neglected novels of the day. I speak not of its merits merely as a portraiture true to the life, and *far* exceeding "Banim" or "Harry Lorrequer," of Irish manners; I speak not of it merely as a tale of sad and powerful interest, but as a solemn, appalling, moral lesson. Nor is it the common lesson of passion making its own retribution, or of vice, rendered so delightful as to seem to wear the cast-off vestments of virtue, triumphing over innocence. Its ground-work is domestic: the seldom told tale of a mother and son: the pride and fondness of the one, the lessons of dubious morality, the education of self-indulgence turning upon *her*. The son of fine and generous nature, becoming her curse—her tyrant—her shame. The abuse of the maternal influence is slowly but admirably unfolded: the mother, who idolises her son, points to his weak and wavering resolution, un-

consciously, the path to crime. There exists not in fiction, I dare to assert it, a finer portraiture than that of "Mrs. Cregaw," the mother of the fine-spirited, warm-hearted murderer; it is an original creation of the highest power.

"How is it," I asked L.E.L. one morning, "that so fine a work has produced so little sensation? Who is the author?—what?—and where?"

"Alas!" she answered, shaking her head, "he is a poor and almost friendless young man. I know him slightly;" and she drew a rapid picture of the young man whom I had recently seen in company with Maginn, and, for the first time, she made me acquainted with the name of Gerald Griffin.

He is gone: his intellectual strength was to him, indeed, but "labour and sorrow;" his life had "consumed away as a moth fretting a garment," until at last the sirocco came: fever attacked him, and he sank to rest in the convent, to which he had retreated like a "stricken deer" to lie down and die. He was a very gifted, a good man, and, as a writer of fiction, a great man. But he had no worshippers. He lived in the solitude of the heart, in the vast, unthinking world which moves on like a tide, and recks not the minute objects which it passes over in its ebb and flow. His heart was saddened, if not broken by the neglect of critics—the difficulty of living by talents which were not justly appreciated. But despair never made him prostitute his powers to mere popularity; nor did it find him rebellious beneath the chastisements of Heaven.

His was not the rash impatience of Chatterton; rather let me compare him to the humble, the lonely, the suffering Kirke White,—a reed, indeed, shaken and bowed down by the angry blast of adversity,—a delicate plant amid a wilderness of rank weeds.

Among the heads which were bowed down to listen to the fancies of Maginn, was a face then fresh, and youthful, and beaming. A dark, quick, searching eye—a smile full of sweetness—a brow on which sat the innocence of youth—a gentle deportment, and the universal love and sympathy of all around him, proclaimed the presence of Laman Blanchard. I dare not prolong the theme—I will not linger on a remembrance too recent to be recalled without intense regret, a sorrow too fresh for consolation. The biographer, and the subject of his pen, the reviewer and the reviewed, alike sleep in the tomb. How hurried was their destiny! how brief their summer's day! how few the years that were allotted them to delight or to instruct mankind. I return to my first proposition—men of letters live fast: it was not so of yore. Formerly they attained old age: their occupation was not a killing one. Let me throw aside my pen and muse on things that have been—and recall, like the sexagenarian of old, the different aspects of the lettered world: the coteries of the published and the publisher.

CHAP. II.

HAM HOUSE, AND ITS INHABITANTS.

Everything has changed with me since I made the stately avenues of Ham the scene of my evening's promenade, or trod the turf of the Water Gallery of Hampton Court, or took a tantalising glimpse, as I drove along, of Holland House — everything has changed, not only with me, but with others; and the world has become so enterprising, and yet so practical, that I am almost ashamed of my mania for old places. I blush for my love of communing (in my reveries) with those whom we complacently call "our ancestors." I feel that I ought to lay down my predilections for many personages who, long since gathered to *their* homes, would never, if they flourished in these days of rectitude and propriety, be admitted to *ours*. I perceive, now, that it is almost a guilty curiosity which urged me to explore corners and closets, some years ago, with a weak zest; and to wish that the old wainscoting of those dark nooks could tell tales, and disclose passages of various lives, which were by no means exemplary, or fit for a family edition.

If, therefore, I recall, with a foolish, fond enthusiasm, the manners and the pleasures of a long-past era, it is

without any wish to extenuate the vices, or to tint with bright hues the tone of society which has been so completely altered since the Cabal dared to whisper treason against England's holiest interests in the Duchess of Lauderdale's parlour; since Charles II. made the *parterre* which his courtiers called "Paradise," at Hampton Court, a very improper sort of place to be so named; or, worse, since James II. ventured even to receive the Pope's nuncio, in open day, in that stately palace. I am free to confess, that the patrician classes, with whom I have much to do, at any rate in my poor attempts as a chronicler, have, in England, made an extraordinary advance in knowledge, in right thinking, in their objects in life, even since the beginning of the present century. The very noblemen, it is possible, whose forefathers were the frivolous wits of Whitehall, are now delivering lectures on history — the descendants of many who spent their patrimony in reckless extravagance, are now actively engaged in promoting savings-banks, erecting washing-houses and lodging-houses, for the benefit of a class whom your fine gentlemen of the days when Ham House was the centre of fashion, scarcely regarded as fellow-creatures. The useless loveliness which the faithful ability of Lely has commemorated, is all forgotten now in the untiring activity of our *grandes dames* in the cause of the humble ones whose beauty is often seared by tears—whose strength is consumed by hard work or by scanty food.

I am persuaded, too, however my choice of pursuits

may show to the contrary, that literature has no reason to regret the past. What gentleman, who could mend or use a pen, but would now rise infuriate against a publisher who should dare to say, as Lintot did (speaking even to Pope himself), that "Translators were the saddest pack of rogues in the world?"—what author of any grade would deem himself honoured, as did "the lean man who looked very like a good scholar," mentioned by the arrogant Lintot, in being asked to step into that great publisher's back shop, and "partake of a piece of beef and a slice of pudding," notwithstanding that the poor, jealous, half-starved man had dared to shrug his shoulders over Pope's Homer? Surely it is well for men of letters that such days as *those* are passed away; nor, in regard to general society, must I deny that it is greatly improved since pedantry went out, and nicety of personal habits came in; and that even Mrs. Montagu's tea-table, with Mrs. Elizabeth Carter, in all the grandeur of her intellectual superiority, seated before it, with her snuff-box in her hands, "not very clean," must have been rather unpleasant to fastidious people.

Not that I have any right to set up for a critic of society. My favourite relaxations have been listening to old nurses and decayed housekeepers, who were as idle as myself; to gardeners of old gardens; to apothecaries, parish clerks, pew-women, sextons. I never went lower than gravediggers, although a ratcatcher was once named to me as a man of research and of historical accuracy. My friend, when I grew in love

with the precincts of Ham House, one dreary summer, was a carpenter, or, as we now call him, a mechanic. He lived in the aristocratic village of Petersham, and knew every cupboard and cellar-door in Ham House — every plank in every floor in Sudbrook — every coffin (for his trade took in that range also) in the churchyard. He was very talkative, and his wife more so. She taught and whipped, or rather whipped and taught, a little day-school; and I took, by the week, their best parlour — cold as the grave, yet noisy as a rookery — which was overshadowed by the mantling boughs of the superb trees of Sudbrook Park. Here I gleaned much that was curious, much that was not to be repeated, and some things that were true, about the noble demesnes and their proprietors, in and about Petersham. My imagination still brightens when I recall the green lawns, the cedars, the oriental planes, the tulip trees, and magnolias of Sudbrook — now devoted to the purposes of water-cure; but my attention was directed to the records of that isolated and stately house, in which so much was contrived and had been left undone.

The ancient, excellent lady, who then inhabited Ham House, was, when I lived in the carpenter's cottage at Sudbrook, still the benignant mistress of her well-ordered household, the benefactress of the parish, and the tenacious preserver of all the antique characteristics of the old place, which she graced by her dignity in later age, by her beauty and high fashion in former times. I speak, therefore, of my own recollections of Ham House as it was in her time, when she, who obtained in her

lifetime the appellation of the good Lady Dysart, loved it so well that she rarely left it, as a residence.

At this period, not far from Teddington Ferry, a superb avenue of elms intersected the green meadow which reaches down to the strand. Gates there were and are; but these, whether from custom immemorial, or from the benignity of the then great lady of the precincts,—these, at the period of which I speak, were left open; and boldly, yet silently, I then threaded the pathway down the avenue.

I always paused in the centre, for thence was a view of the stately mansion of Ham. Now *Ham*, be it remembered, in Saxon, means mansion; and another celebrated old place, mouldering to decay, bears the same name at Chertsey, in Surrey. That, too, was a residence of Charles II., and it is often confounded with Ham and Hatch. That, too, sheltered the second James when he meditated his flight from England; and in its roof contained a chapel, and holes in its massive walls for his guards. But Ham, the abode of the Lauderdales and Dysarts, is a well-conditioned tenement, the memento of things long passed by.

Day after day have I trampled down the autumnal leaves which bestrewed the pathway of that avenue, and walked musingly on until I came opposite to the mansion. It stands facing the river, a deep-sunk fence separating it from the field along which the avenue stretches. This house, still fresh in its red-brick hue as if erected yesterday, was built in 1610. Two projections at either end contained the principal dwelling-

rooms; the centre being occupied by the hall. The base of these projections opens into a sort of cloister, and probably in former times steps were there, leading into the flat garden or to the broad terrace below: but these no longer exist. Along either side of the house are walls, ornamented with busts—of the Cæsars, of course—in round niches, and behind the northern wall are extensive flower-gardens. But the front, old but not antique, complete in design, lofty and commanding, as it were, even the subsidiary avenue, arrests the attention, and fixes it strongly upon that middle period when chivalry and feudalism had expired, when Rebellion had recently burnt out her last brand, and when the arts of faction had succeeded to the bold efforts of the warlike. I could stand there for a good half-hour, gazing upon the changeless busts, and upon the withering flowers below. All was then still as the grave, not an object was seen flitting across those latticed windows or standing within the cloister; the voice of a peacock, within the walled gardens, startled me, I remember, as if James II. had called me; or as if the emissaries of William had summoned me to their barge.

A court, which doubtless was formerly the back entrance, is now the approach to the house, the grand approach having been manifestly from the avenue which intersects the common. Shameful innovation!—Our ancestors never slunk into their homes, but drove proudly up to them, their outriders blowing their horns, as we learn from one of the letters imputed to Lord Lyttleton, who pretended to regret having turned the

corner on his uncle the bishop's coach, owing to the prelate's having no horns after him. In dark nights, how fine must it have been to see a train of some half-dozen flambeaux, held by running footmen, carried after my lady, or her grace of Lauderdale, on her return from some gorgeous dinner or fashionable drive in the metropolis!

But to return to the court. Most ignoble is it, turfed over with a *pavé*, exactly like a French road, in the centre. Some ancient trees grow in the enclosure, the ilex there displays its mournful verdure, and an ash of prodigious size throws up its branches even almost to the roof. A mean door, and a low step or two, form the entrance to the house.

"And this," thought I, "is the door of Ham House, where Clifford, and Ashley, and Buckingham, and Arlington, and Lauderdale, met in infamous communion; and where Heaven knows what of *diablerie* went on." I mused in the sunshine for awhile; my eyes rested on an old sun-dial, set there, probably, to mark the time to the grooms and hostlers; and conjectured that that instrument, too much disused in our modern pleasure-grounds, had probably stood there when the deist Shaftesbury or the debauchee Buckingham had dwelt at Ham. *Their* eyes had gazed upon it; and that *pavé* and that tranquil court had been paced by quick footsteps, and those walls had echoed to the whispers of their plotting tongues; and here was the old house, in the nineteenth century, tenanted only by an aged lady, soon to be gathered to the home of her fathers.

We talk of the Cabal confidently, and the names of Shaftesbury and of Buckingham are as familiar to us as any in English history. Well, here in that old house were their meetings held, their schemes contrived. What, however, was the history of the structure in which the voices of the reprobate, and the casuistry of the profligate politicians of the seventeenth century were heard? Knowest thou, gentle reader? No. Neither did I, until I learned, from long looking upon the old place, to desire some knowledge of its origin, its rise; so that I yearned to penetrate into the very secrets of those ancient chambers from which, in the days of the venerable countess, the public were so carefully excluded.

To begin from the very beginning. The manor of Ham has not, it seems, the honour of being mentioned in the Conqueror's survey of England. King Athelstane had, indeed, granted lands there to his minister, Wulgar; but, in the reign of John, these reverted to the crown, and were given to Godfrey, Bishop of Winchester. It was then valued at 6*l.* per annum. In the reign of Edward I. another bishop (of Bath and Wells) had a certain interest in the warren of Ham; then a long period of darkness as to the fate of the manor, owing to the deficiency of records, succeeds; but, in the reign of James I., we find that it was again in possession of the crown; and that a fair mansion, built for the residence of the heir-apparent, Henry Prince of Wales, was erected, and Ham House raised its stately head upon a plain meadow near the river

tide. Wherefore Hach or Hatch was coupled to Ham does not appear. Now *hach* signifies in Saxon a gate; and it is conjectured that that part of Ham thus called took its name from a gate into the ancient park of Shene, for all about the place was royal: to the north was Richmond Park, and close by was Shene. Combe was also a royal demesne; and yet Ham was then, and still is, only an appendage—a hamlet to Kingston, just at two miles' distance.

In the course of centuries, Ham owned a great variety of masters, mostly favoured servants of the monarchs, who gave away leases of the lands; and then, by some mysterious process, recovered them. It was tenanted by the Lords Lovel, the last of whom, a partisan of the house of York in the affair of Lambert Simnel, was slain at the battle of Stoke in 1487. It was bestowed by Henry VIII. on Anne of Cleves, for the maintenance of her royal dignity; she resigned it, however, to King Edward VI., dying calmly and respectably at Chelsea in 1537. (How much she must have laughed in her sleeve at her escape from the tyrant!) Ham was never graced, it seems, by her presence as a resident. It is, however, recited as a parcel of her jointure, in a deed whereby James II. conferred it on his eldest born, Henry, and to his heirs for ever.

But, alas! the poor prince had no heirs, but died only two years after the pompous settlement of this scrap of crown lands, and with its dependency, Crowel, a wooded islet on the river,—with its weir on the

Thames, valued at 6*s.* yearly;—its windmill, valued at 1*l.*; its dove-cot, at 5*s.*, and its acres of rich pasture-land, all mentioned in the various surveys taken; it was put into the hands of trustees in behalf of Charles Prince of Wales, after the death of his brother.

It did not long continue in the hands of Charles: after his accession, a wily Scotsman, William Murray, a descendant of a Lord Tullibardine, son of the rector of Dysart in Fife, obtained a grant, or a lease, of it from the king; he was raised to the dignity of a peer of Scotland, by the title of Baron Huntingtower and Earl of Dysart. Now, therefore, we approach the intelligible part of this annal, though I protest between the Dysarts, and the Tallemaches, and the Lauderdales, there seems, at first sight, a mighty confusion.

Elizabeth, the eldest daughter of the first Earl of Dysart, having married a Tallemache, took upon herself to produce all this ambiguity, by assuming the title of Countess of Dysart, and hence the family name was altered; and her marrying Sir Lionel Talmache was, it seems, altogether a mistake, her father having designed her for Sir Robert Murray, afterwards justice-clerk, and one of the original projectors of the Royal Society. Her husband did not live long enough to enjoy the reflected honour of her rank, nor to contend with what appears to have been an artful and imperious temper. He left her a widow, and a widow she long remained, until John Earl of Lauderdale (represented by the letter L in Cabal), to his sorrow, undertook the management of this clever, ambitious shrew.

The acquaintance between this well-matched, worldly couple began (no offence) years before the death of Sir Lionel Talmache, the first husband. The Earl of Lauderdale was married, it is true, to a daughter of the Earl of Home, and had a daughter; but, Scotchman and Presbyterian as he was, he was not so saintly as to abstain from a platonic attachment to the Countess of Dysart, who had an absolute dominion over him. They quarrelled, it is true, for friendships of a questionable character are like a rope of sand; but upon the death of Sir Lionel Talmache, Lady Dysart made up all differences, and lived on such terms with Lauderdale, that she broke, according to the slanderous Bishop Burnet, his poor wife's heart, and was successful enough both to drive her to Paris and to kill her by jealousy—a very sure poison. Lady Dysart then married Lord Lauderdale,—whose history, by the way, requires some comment before I finish my vituperations against the countess. But, first, it is worth mentioning that Oliver Cromwell is said to have visited her in her husband's old house of Helmingham, not always in the most saintly spirit; and her influence over the Protector was supposed *not* to be the result of the highest virtue possible. But this may be the tale of party writers.

As a Maitland, the Earl of Lauderdale might be supposed to possess the integrity of that loyal race. He had, at all events, its ability. "He was," writes old Burnet, "a man of parts and learning, not of morals or imputed integrity; of an impetuous spirit,

a great promoter of arbitrary power, and, indeed, the underminer of episcopacy in Scotland, by laying it on a new foundation, the pleasure of the king." He was as universally hated and feared in England as in Scotland. Such was the public character of the man to whom Lady Dysart allied herself: and she did not improve his code of doubtful morality.

To go through the details of this unprincipled statesman's life were tedious. To be brief, he was a party to the bargain wherein Charles I. was sold by the Scots, though he afterwards inveighed against that transaction when it suited his purpose. He was the betrayer of that monarch at Carisbrooke, where, in one of his moments of weakness and despair, Charles, whose movements were well compared to the "doublings of the hunted hare," signed the engagement. Latterly, however, Lauderdale suffered for the cause of Charles II. He accompanied that king on his march to England, was taken prisoner at the battle of Worcester, and underwent a confinement of nine years in the Tower, whence he was released in 1660 by General Monk. As a reward for his sufferings in the royal cause, he was made secretary of state for Scotland, together with numerous other honours, only of moment to our purpose as showing the extreme dignity of Ham House, which could contain within its walls the secretary of state for Scotland, a lord of session, a president of council, a commissioner of the treasury, a lord of the bedchamber, and the governor of the Castle of Edinburgh, all in one personage. In short, the whole

power and patronage of Scotland were placed at this man's control; and how did he fulfil his charge?

During his imprisonment Lauderdale had received some impressions of religion, which, however, melted away before the influence of courtly favour. His very reasons for opposing the restoration of episcopacy in Scotland were most crafty; "for," he argued, "if the Scots can follow the bent of their own inclinations in these matters, they will always be at the devotion of the king." But he proved afterwards, as Rapin observes, a violent persecutor of the Presbyterians. He was, indeed, about as bad a Scot as ever truckled to power; and his infamous qualities were emblazoned in strong colours upon his hard, coarse countenance. As you walk into the Long Gallery at Ham —— but stay, I must not anticipate; my reader is not introduced there at present. Take, then, the portraiture drawn by Burnet—his enemy, to be sure. "The Duke of Lauderdale made a very ill appearance. He was very big; his hair red, hanging oddly about him; his tongue was too large for his mouth, which made him bedew all that he talked to; and his whole manner was rough and boisterous [not unlike the bishop himself], and very unfit for a court." He was haughty, too, beyond expression, and had a violence of passion which resembled madness; yet the creature was smooth and abject to those whom he would fain court. Sir Peter Lely, in *his* portrait, has softened these harsh points, so far as personal appearance is concerned. There is something portly rather than

awkward in his broad frame, whilst the delicate hand, enclosed in its ruffle of point lace, shows — such is the popular notion — high descent. Well must his flowing wig and loose robe of silk, and his deep, embroidered collar, and still more his determined, self-conscious deportment, have accorded with the gorgeous garniture of his own withdrawing-room, or added additional importance to the great entrance itself. "He was," adds Burnet, "the ablest friend and the violentest enemy I ever knew" — a strange complication! Obstinate, too, so that if any one sought to persuade him into a measure, it was the sure way to make him swear he would have none of it. "He was to be let alone." With all this stubborn will, he displayed the greatest inconsistency. A Presbyterian, he yet made way for Popery and arbitrary power. Beginning life with a contempt for wealth, nevertheless he ran into an expenditure which made him stick at nothing to support it. Smooth and moderate in the beginning of his ministry, he made it like an Inquisition for cruelty ere it was, happily for his country, closed for ever.

His wife was deemed responsible for many of these crying sins. She soon acquired such an ascendancy over him, that he was the very slave of her humours and passions. All applications were made to her. She sold all places at court, grasping at unholy gains, which she lavished in vanities. Beautiful, although her portrait in the Gallery would not prove it (but our notions of beauty are altogether revolutionised since the days of the Charles's), yet even more endowed with ability

than with beauty, witty in conversation, learned in divinity and history, in mathematics and philosophy, and so far a worthy companion of Lauderdale, who was a man of great attainments, she yet wanted the best of learning, practical religion. "She was violent in everything she set about; a violent friend, a much more violent enemy. She had a restless ambition, lived at a vast expense, was ravenously covetous, and would have stuck at nothing by which she might compass her ends." So says Burnet. And she was gratified, for her marriage with Lauderdale was soon succeeded by his being created a duke, and installed a Knight of the Garter.

These were the great days of Ham House. It must have been the scene of a perpetual round of courtly festivities, and during this season of prosperity it was furnished at a very great expense for those times. The countess, too, made additions to the structure, and Verrio was employed to paint its ceilings; and great magnificence of decoration was bestowed, according to the judgment of its ducal owners, in its saloons: even the bellows and brushes were made of solid silver, or of silver filigree. But everything stands or falls by comparison, and Ham must not dare to raise its head now amid our modern mansions. One merit that the artists who furnished it may claim is — durability.

Ten years ago there were not, probably, a hundred people in England who had seen the interior of Ham House, for the late venerable Countess of Dysart guarded it with a jealous care. At her death it was opened for awhile. It is now closed to the public, per-

haps for ever; and who knows whether it may not soon be pulled down, and the ground let for building leases, and the mansion appropriated to a water-cure or a madhouse?

I was one of the first to enter its open doors, and to traverse that court unappalled by the fear of the countess, and to ring the hall-bell boldly. It was a fine summer's day, and the rooks above were startled by the sound. I entered; the housekeeper, a person still of middle age, yet long a resident there, greeted me, and we passed through a long, narrow passage into the hall. It has no particular feature of antiquity, but contains some exquisite portraits of the later members of the family, more especially of the late Countess of Dysart, by Sir Joshua Reynolds. The name of this exquisite creature was Magdalen — Magdalen Lewis, of a Warwickshire family, the daughter of David Lewis, Esq., of Malvern Hall. Like many of Reynolds' subjects she is robed in white, her hair drawn back from a forehead of marble, her features delicate as her complexion. Such was the countess in her youth; elegant, highbred, and gentle she must have been; and the great painter must have delighted in so graceful a subject. Another lady — I forget what member of the great family — fronts you in a white riding-habit, man's hat and boots, looking audaciously, like the fashionable Amazon of the day. So far is modern. You ascend a superb staircase, balustraded with walnut-tree wood, and adorned with carvings of military trophies (the pride of the housekeeper), and you enter the peculiar region of the Lauderdales.

We have stated Burnet's opinion that the Duchess of Lauderdale would stick at nothing to gratify her vanity. What a sale of places must there have been to furnish Ham! How much shuffling and trickery on the back-stairs of Whitehall to complete it! And as it was then, in the times when Charles II. visited the duchess — and when the hatchment was placed there for the duke, dying of vexation and in despair, — so is it now. Not a chair is removed — not a mantelpiece altered. The silver bellows are on the hearth; the great cabinet of ivory lined with cedar, in the north drawing-room, is there, fresh as when placed by the Presbyterian duke's proud duchess; the settees, covered with gold-coloured damask embroidered with brown, are there; the rich damask still hangs on the walls; and yet how changed, how silent, how melancholy! — if rooms so truly cheerful in point of light, and endowed with a rare appearance of comfort, *can* be melancholy.

I stopped awhile to look out over the broad window-seat — why are such window-seats out of vogue now? — into the secluded garden below, and the housekeeper (brushing from the shutter one of those huge spiders called the Cardinal's, erroneously said to be peculiar to Hampton Court, but common in all the old houses in that part of Surrey, as she spoke,) pointed out to me the vista up the great avenue beyond the garden, and agreed with me that the entrance must have been *there*, and with me regretted — for she is part and parcel of the place — that such an approach should ever have been abandoned.

And then we moved on into an inner room, containing choice miniatures, fresh as if the carmine had been worked in that morning, and some rare relics, — among the rest a lock of Charles I.'s hair, kept under a glass-case, and "mightily valued by my late lady." All was in the most creditable preservation, — mind, by preservation I do not mean restoration. I have a dread of that word, an extreme dread of seeing an old house or an old picture restored. I would rather let it moulder— crumble first, I was going to say, but that is profane, than have it "restored." This room is dark — suited, therefore, to the whisperings of the Cabal (of whom anon), — suited to receive, as the secret bribes from France, the famous portraits set in diamonds, to the value of 3000*l.*, a present to each of the infamous five, — nay, for aught one knows, this chamber may have been the very spot where Clifford, the first of the junto, whispered to the king the scheme for shutting up the Exchequer.

I breathed more freely in the Long Gallery. This runs along the west side of the house, and is ninety-two feet long. It is hung with admirable portraits, and among them the Duke and Duchess of Lauderdale are conspicuous in all the insignia of their dearly-purchased greatness. I could detect in the features of the duchess nothing of that beauty which is said to have enamoured the Protector, and which enslaved Lauderdale. On the contrary, a vulgar full-blown virago is depicted on that canvass. Well may one trace the "Sultana," as she has been called, in that imperious brow. But, in

the low forehead, puffed-out face, and fiery eye of the Duke of Lauderdale, you see the very man himself — the *Bonner* of politics, the minister who would have burned and slayed had he dared. Well might the oppressed people of Scotland tremble at his frown, and wonderful was the loyalty which could separate the dark deeds of the minister from the true notion of a sensual, an extravagant, but not a cruel monarch, and could continue to love the Stuarts, whilst the advisers were detested.

The duke is in his Garter robes, by Lely, — the duchess by the same master; and many other portraits, of which I shun a long enumeration, give a genuine notion of the character of the times. Among the rest is a likeness of Lady Lorn, the daughter of the duchess, and the mother of the celebrated John, Duke of Argyle, who was born at Ham House; and there is the most living, the most winning picture of Charles the First I ever saw; and also one of his eldest son, painted expressly for the Duke of Lauderdale. We paced the gallery, the housekeeper and I, with many a sigh given to bygone days — though, I believe, very unreasonably, as I shall presently show. Our own are much safer, much freer, much happier days, though not so picturesque—at least, as far as we can judge—than those of old; and, let it be remembered, we have the elegances, the interests of olden days preserved to us, not their vulgarisms and commonplaces. We see antiquity in its holiday dress; its aristocratic manners are alone preserved to our inspection.

In the old gallery might I fancy that the laugh of Buckingham still resounded, his polished manners softening his wit; the sarcasm of Shaftesbury—all well-bred, nevertheless; the sly, diabolical suggestions of Clifford, well turned with a compliment, might they not still be heard? We passed through a small, dark room, in which, observed my conductress, "they *say* the Cabal had their meetings." It seemed, indeed, just large enough to contain five persons. This room, if I remember aright, is tapestried. Of what must that old arras have been the depository!

We descended the stairs, passed one corner of the hall, and, by especial favour, I was allowed to see a suite of rooms on the ground floor, inhabited by the late countess, Magdalen, and in earlier days by her great ancestress, the Duchess of Lauderdale. And most curious are these rooms. Every article of furniture is as it was originally placed there, not introduced of late years; and, at the termination of a suite of three rooms, is a smaller apartment, such as in olden days was called a closet. It opens into a bedchamber, and is adapted to meditation and retirement. The walls were hung with a rich velvet, and in one corner, now mouldering with time, is a memento of the pride of the duchess. There, in that high-backed cushioned chair, was her accustomed seat when in retirement. But even here greatness must needs be present also. Overhead is a canopy similar to that called in palaces the cloth of estate. It resembles, in homely truth, the tester and top of a bed, most rich in its texture; and its valence, to use a

humble phrase, is formed into deep Vandykes. This, too, was the late countess's favourite retreat.

I could not help reflecting how different must have been the meditations of the ambitious duchess to the holy thoughts and aspirations of a happy passage to a better world of the countess. How turbulent must have been the day-dreams of the former! With what mingled exultation and remorse she must have recalled the subjugation of Oliver's proud, cold heart, and the deep wounds which she had inflicted upon the injured Countess of Lauderdale! What speculations, what calculations, worthy of the base and mean, must have been revolved beneath that cloth of estate, hanging there still, but already giving tokens that, like all that was great, all that was historical in that house, it has passed, or is passing away! When I thought of the excellent countess, I looked upon the chamber with a sort of reverence. When I recalled the Duchess of Lauderdale, the half-holy, secluded character of the closet seemed all defiled. I was aroused by the sound of music, and, looking out, perceived that these apartments faced the river. A party from London were dancing on the grass, beneath the old avenues; the feeling of desecration and decay became painfully strong, and I hastened into the court again, and felt relieved by the voices of the rooks, birds of ancient descent, and most perfect genealogy, whose fathers and forefathers had doubtless frequented the same spot, even when Buckingham and Ashley came full of dark schemes to Ham House.

This brings me to the CABAL—that conspiracy against English freedom, which did more to injure the dynasty it professed to uphold than almost any rash act of a fated and infatuated race of kings. Of what singular materials was it composed! One single bond there seems to have been between them — the absence of all principle, of all fears; and, we must not deceive ourselves, pleasant as he was handsome (for, in spite of ungainly features, his was the irresistible beauty of expression), free, and, perhaps (though I doubt it), kind-hearted, Charles II. was as great a miscreant as any of those who composed the Cabal.

Clifford was the first—the first to lend himself to a scheme cherished by Charles, to make himself absolute and to re-establish Popery—a fact which rests upon the authority of the celebrated Father Orleans, and which was told to him by James II. Now, the privy council was at that time composed of twenty-one persons, and it was impossible for so large a number to be the subservient tools of the king's designs. A cabinet council was, therefore, formed of these five persons only—

C lifford,
A rlington,
B uckingham,
A shley,
L auderdale.

And the junto soon acquired the name which it has borne ever since.

Clifford was a Roman Catholic. In his youth he was reputed to be "of a very unsettled head, and a roving,

shattered brain;" yet he was a man of parts and acquirements, and of bravery, too, and had served both under James Duke of York, and also Prince Rupert, at sea. He was supposed to be in the pay of France, which is very likely, for everybody then was in somebody's pay, and disinterested statesmen were in a chrysalis state, waiting to appear in all their beauty of wings and colours, until better times. It was Clifford who advised King Charles to shut up the Exchequer, the history of which was this. The monarch, being in want of money, offered the white staff to any minister who would assist him to raise 150,000*l.*, without applying to Parliament. The plan had been mooted by Ashley, Earl of Shaftesbury; but Clifford contrived to make that nobleman drunk, and to get his secret from him, after which he demanded the reward, and was made lord-treasurer.

This was only one of his daring designs. He was an eloquent speaker, but could not keep his temper, and the dissolution of the Cabal was partly owing to his intemperance in upholding the king's measures, when he actually called the House of Commons "*a horrible monster*." He was disgraced in 1673, three years after the formation of the Cabal, and retired to his seat at Ugbrook, where he died of a fearful inward disorder. Clifford must have been forty years old when Ham House received him and his co-mates. "He was," says an old writer, "a gentleman of a proper, manly body, of a large and noble mind, and

a sound heart." A fine description, if the conduct of his life had not contradicted it. "He had a voluble, flowing tongue, a ready wit, a firm judgment, and undaunted courage and resolution." At all events, he acted from real though mistaken enthusiasm for his faith and predilections.

Would that I could say the same of all the rest! The most skilled in low arts, the greatest adept at raillery and ridicule, was Henry Bennet, Lord Arlington. He was not the upstart at whom the Duke of Ormond pointed that word of opprobrium, when, in the zenith of Arlington's fortunes, he styled him "one whom he had known a very little gentleman." On the contrary, he was, or was discovered to be when he had risen, of a very good family, so that he came into the world, in point of birth, with all the advantages that a man could boast. He had served as a volunteer in the Royalist armies in the preceding reign, and was wounded at Andover; and, at a time of life when most youths have only finished their studies, Bennet had distinguished himself as a wit, a soldier, and a statesman. Bennet had long acted as secretary to James, Duke of York; he was also a favourite with the queen-mother, and when he became, in 1662, secretary of state, his feelings were deeply imbued with the convictions of those whom he had served. He is said — but without any proof — to have been the chief agent in the downfall of Clarendon, and to have promoted the black ingratitude of the king to the chancellor. At all events, he had the art of raising his own name, and, at the time

when he became Baron Arlington, he was regarded as a great and favoured minister.

Arlington, nevertheless, was a man of the least genius of any of his party, but he supplied his deficiency of talents by a skilful management of those which he possessed. He pleased even when he was known to deceive, and his manners commanded an influence in quarters where he inspired no respect. "The deficiency of his integrity," writes Macpherson, "was forgiven in the decency of his dishonesty." He professed the Protestant form of faith, but was at heart a Roman Catholic. Timid, superstitious, and double-minded, this minister, when the well-merited vengeance of the country fell upon the Cabal, bent like an osier beneath the blast, and, like an osier, survived to rise again. He died a minister of the crown, even William of Orange professing a regard for the aged statesman, whom none esteemed, but whom all parties endured.

Arlington, in his rise and during his decline in royal favour, suffered much. Clarendon relates that, being ashamed of his own name, he wished, cuckoo-like, to plant himself in the nest of another. He, therefore, adopted the Barony of Mency, an old title long dormant, until the proper heir desired him not to affect a title to which he had no relation; he was then glad to take the title of a little farm belonging to his father, Arlington (properly Harlington), between London and Uxbridge.

In the days of disfavour, Charles used to delight in hearing the old secretary mimicked by his courtiers. The bold, brave Talbot, Earl of Tyrconnel, one day

seeing Arlington, who was then the lord chamberlain, represented at court by a person with a patch and a staff, remonstrated with Charles on this indecent ridicule of one who had followed the fortunes of the monarch when in exile. Charles retorted, by saying he had reason to complain too; for, "not content with coming to prayers as others did, Arlington must needs be constant at the sacraments too." "And does not your majesty the same?" inquired Talbot. "Odd's fish!" was the reply; "I hope there is a difference between me and Harry Bennet!" Thus Arlington overacted his part. Some of these very sacraments—iniquitously received to keep up the mask of Protestantism—were doubtless administered in the chapel at Ham House, a plain, but ancient structure, forming part of the mansion. There, in the silence that will never again, probably, be broken by orison or sermon, still remains the cushion upon which Charles I. knelt when he visited Ham; and there, bound in red velvet, and with a large cross embroidered in gold on the back, is the worn prayer-book which he used.

Clifford and Bennet were fast friends; contrasts, it must be owned: the one a burning brand, like the Fiery Cross which is carried from hill to hill in Scotland to proclaim war and murder; the other the steady, systematic pioneer, who cautiously prepares the way for more commanding spirits to advance and carry their point.

Bennet appears to have been a good-looking man for a courtier. His face was calm, and the features

were well-proportioned. Across his nose a patch, the theme of the king's merriment, is always depicted in his portraits; but whether he wore it owing to a wound, or whether he assumed it in compliance with a fashion of the Interregnum, when gentlemen as well as ladies wore patches, it must be left to the curious in such matters to decide. His long flowing locks, his deep, falling cape, and rich bandeau over one shoulder and under the other, his sleeves puckered up and tied with golden cord, his delicate "linen," as they modestly called shirt-sleeves in those days, must have had a fine effect, methinks, in that old gallery, to say nothing of a rich surcoat of black velvet, lined with white satin, which he wore. Oh, days never to be recalled, when men were dressed, not like jockeys, but like gentlemen and men of taste! Away with the tight *culottes* and tail-coat, and welcome again the deep collar and the rich doublet, and the loose and graceful surcoat!

But the flower of the Cabal was the brave, generous, dissolute Buckingham: he was the Crown Imperial of this posy of base herbs and tiger-lilies. How singular was his destiny! By what a fatality does he not seem to have been governed! He began life under a cloud, passed it in a whirlwind; it was closed almost in obscurity. His childhood was marked by peculiar misfortune—his father's death, his mother's second marriage; the one event being prefaced by omens and foretold by an apparition, the office of which was to avert, if possible, by supernatural means, the impending danger over George Villiers, Duke of Buckingham.

Few ghost stories have been so attested as this; for this rests upon the affirmation of a certain Mr. Towse, a "religious and virtuous gentleman," to Mr. Windham and his wife. One night, Mr. Towse being in bed, and his candle standing near him burning, there came into his chamber an old gentleman, dressed in the costume of Queen Elizabeth's time. Now on the first appearance of this unexpected guest Mr. Towse was somewhat alarmed, yet collecting himself, he asked, "in the name of Heaven, who he was?" The ghostly visitant replied, that he was Sir George Villiers, the father of the Duke of Buckingham; and added, that Mr. Towse might remember his going to school at a certain place in Leicestershire; and now, in the regions of bliss, or otherwise, as it might be, remembering the former kindness of Mr. Towse to him when a schoolboy, this apparition paid that gentleman the compliment of a visit, the purport of which was, to deliver to the said Duke of Buckingham a message, forewarning him how to avoid the ruin which was likely to befall him. Mr. Towse at first refused this commission, saying, that it would only bring contempt and reproach upon him; but the apparition was urgent, telling him that the discovery of certain passages in the duke's life, known only to himself, of which he (the ghost) would apprise him, should preserve him from the imputation of having a distempered fancy. So the apparition took his leave for that night, but came again the next. (How could Mr. Towse survive it!) By that time the resolution of good Mr. Towse was taken, and he assented to go to

the duke; and then certain matters were disclosed to him, which, afterwards, the unfortunate Buckingham confessed were such as "God, or the devil, could alone have revealed." But yet, though long and private audiences took place between the duke and Mr. Towse, no impression was made upon the mind of the ill-starred and unbelieving nobleman.

When the duke fell by the hand of Felton, all who knew Towse could remember that the day had been predicted by him; for the apparition was now so frequently at the elbow of the strong-nerved Mr. Towse, that he regarded its presence with as little trouble as "if it had been a friend or neighbour that had come to visit him!" Wonderful man of iron mind! Methinks *I* should have gone to the world's end rather than have awaited another visit, whilst *he* slept calmly night after night in that same chamber, until the quilted doublet, and stiff ruff, and bombastic continuations of the old Sir George, did actually night after night appear. Mr. Towse should be canonised.

Other predictions were there, all well authenticated, namely, the singular presentiment of Lady Denbigh, the duke's sister, who, when writing to her brother on the very day of his death, did bedew her paper with her tears; and after a passion of grief, for which she could find no reason, for she knew not of his danger, fell into a swoon. Her letter ended thus: "I will pray for your happy return, which I look to with a great cloud over my head, too heavy for my poor heart to bear without torment. But I hope the great God of

heaven will bless you." When the Bishop of Ely waited upon the lady with the news of her brother's death, he found her awaking from a frightful dream, in which she had heard the people shout that the Duke of Buckingham was sick. Buckingham had, it is true, been ill, and had parted from the king, Charles I., and other friends, as if his soul "had divined that he should see them no more." Yet he was restored to full health and vigour when the murderous hand of John Felton dealt him that mortal stab into the heart, which left his son George an infant orphan, just a year old.

The baby duke was adopted by Charles I., who in his first visit to the widowed duchess promised to be a husband to her and a father to her children. She, however, chose another husband, the Marquis of Antrim, and this marriage greatly displeased the king; and the two sons of the late duke were taken from her and committed to other guardianship. They were never separated until the death of the younger one, were placed under the same tutors at Trinity College, Cambridge, and had the same masters in the art of war, namely, Prince Rupert and the Lord Gerard: and together they assisted at the storming of Lichfield during the Civil Wars; and when the king was a prisoner in the Isle of Wight, raised the royal standard in Surrey. Here, under an oak-tree in the highway, near Kingston, Lord Francis, the younger brother, was killed. The gallant youth, only nineteen years old, had his horse slain under him, but scorned to ask quarter; and the Parliamentarians barbarously refused to give it.

He planted his back against the tree, and stood, there, until nine wounds in his face and body finished the tragical scene.

His estates fell to his brother, who now became the greatest fortune in England. Yet, after various adventures, he fled to Antwerp; and, though offered his estates if he would return in forty days, he was faithful to his father's royal friend. He supported himself by selling his pictures, part of a princely collection brought over to Antwerp by Brian Fairfax, a faithful servant, from York House, that stately residence now recalled only by the name of certain streets on its site, Buckingham Street and Duke Street in the Strand. He remained abroad with Charles II., and with that monarch escaped in the oak at Boscobel. All this time Villiers was in poverty; but he was generous, loyal, and valiant. He became rich; and he was henceforth a prodigal and a ruined man, first in character, afterwards in estate, and finally, in both.

Lord Fairfax, from the fate of war and the decree of parliament, had his estates, or rather had an interest in them; he had also a daughter. The Duke of Buckingham thought he would once more try his fortune; he came over from Antwerp to make love to the lady, and prevailed on a friend to propose a match. He was then an outlaw, and ran a risk of losing both life and liberty, especially as Cromwell had had a share of the duke's estates, and had daughters also to marry. But Buckingham carried the arts of persuasion about with him: he was in person the glory of any court and of any age in which he appeared; his frame

was tall, strong, active; and his manners exquisitely graceful. He had wit and good-nature, was ready to forgive injuries, and had a tender, compassionate heart. These were qualities which Fairfax' daughter did not meet with every day among the dark Puritans and generals who composed her father's society. She loved the duke at once; and they were married in her father's house at Nun Appleton, six miles from York; and their marriage was, though childless, as happy as the profligacy of those days permitted. They lived together "lovingly and decently;" the duchess bearing those faults in her idol which she could not cure.

Buckingham paid dearly, however, at first, for his marriage, by a long imprisonment in the Tower, and afterwards at Windsor, by the command of Cromwell; but his adversity was far less perilous to him than the season of prosperity which followed the Restoration. For, whilst he remained in his father-in-law's house he lived peaceably and innocently; but when he recovered his estates, he became acquainted with a crew of bankers and scriveners, who induced him to resort to practices which brought on the gangrene of usury, from which his property never recovered. The king showered down honours and favours which were but sources of expense to the duke, and did not ensure his gratitude; and he was too justly suspected of concurring with the enemies of Charles in rebellious designs. In these he was concerned with the celebrated Dr. Heydon, the astrologer, to whom Richard and Thurloe Cromwell had applied

to cast their father's nativity, and who predicted that he would be hanged. Buckingham, who had acquired a faith in the art from his residence in France, applied to Heydon to cast the king's nativity, a treasonable offence; yet, in spite of all these misdemeanours, Charles afterwards restored him to favour; and he became one of the dreaded and hated Cabal. Perhaps, sometimes, as this favourite of the world, this gay but polite man, walked on the terrace before Ham House, and parallel with the river, he may have gazed with sorrow on the waters, remembering not only that the slaughtered corpse of his brother had been carried on the stream to its place of interment at Westminster Abbey from Kingston, but coupling that event, and the early career of his life, with the remembrances of his early loyalty and insulted honour, in those days of energy and danger. Fame did him injustice, if to the vices of gaming he added not those of an unbridled licentiousness. His character in this last respect grew so notorious, that whether in his laboratory over the fumes of charcoal, or meditating in his closet, scandal followed him thither. Chemistry was his favourite pursuit within-doors; in the field, fox-hunting. His extravagance was extreme, yet he paid the debts which he incurred.

How keen was his wit, how true his satire, the play of the "Rehearsal" testifies! Dryden, his early acquaintance, was personified in Bayes, being then poet-laureate. That character, as is well-known, at first bore the name of Bilboa, and was intended for Sir Robert Howard. The actors were all ready to perform the comedy, when

the plague of 1664 suspended that representation. Dryden had by this time become poet-laureate, and smarted under the lash of the "good-natured man with the ill-natured muse," as Buckingham has been styled. He revenged himself, and the retributive justice came down with a heavy hand, by displaying the duke in the character of Zimri in "Absalom and Ahithophel." Such were the littlenesses of great men. To Cowley, his early friend at Cambridge, Buckingham was faithful; and, since that poet lived at Chertsey, we may conjecture that the friends may sometimes have met half-way from London, at Ham House, and that the grass walks of the avenues may have been often paced by the footsteps of the poet and the peer.

After the death of Charles II., Buckingham fell into ill health. He retired to his own manor at Helmsley, in Yorkshire, and there solaced the decline of his eventful life by the two opposite occupations of fox-hunting and writing on religious subjects. One day, in consequence of sitting on the ground after hunting, he was seized with an ague and fever. He was conveyed to the house of one of his tenants, on Kirkby Moorside, and in that lowly habitation his last sickness ran its rapid course. He sent to his faithful servant, Brian Fairfax, to prepare him a bed at his house in Bishop Hill, in York, but was speechless before his servant returned to him. Mr. Fairfax found him in that state which is the forerunner of death, indifferent to everything, when he arrived. The duke seemed not to apprehend the danger he was in. When asked

if he would have the minister of the parish to pray for him, he made no reply; but when a popish priest was proposed, the dying man made a violent effort, and exclaimed "No, no." The former question was then repeated, and received, in these few words, an assent, "Yes, send for him." The dying man appeared sensible to the consolation of these last offices, and received the sacrament. That night he expired, being, as it has been aptly remarked, one of the few who bore his title that have died quietly in their beds. With him that title became extinct. Changed, indeed, was the expiring Buckingham from the wild gallant who challenged Lord Rochester to combat, or who fought with Lord Shrewsbury, whilst the countess, disguised as a page, held the duke's horse during the combat, and beheld her husband slain in that duel. Yet Pope has exaggerated the scene of the duke's death, so deeply instructive, when he writes,—

"In the worst inn's worst room, with mat half hung,
The walls of plaster, and the floor of dung,
On once a flock bed, but repaired with straw,
With tape-tied curtains never meant to draw;
The George and Garter dangling from that bed,
Where tawdry yellow strove with dirty red,
Great Villiers lies."

The farm-houses of that period, though possibly rude and comfortless, boasted, however, a homely hospitality, which would doubtless prompt the best exertions in favour of the dying nobleman; and there must have been something consolatory in knowing that

it was amongst his own people that death made its certain approach.

There now remains one person only in this famous, or rather infamous, junto, to be recalled before I lay down the pen. This was Anthony Ashley, first Earl of Shaftesbury, the grandfather of the well-known author of the "Characteristics," whose education the Earl of Shaftesbury superintended. Ashley began public life by the study of the law; at eighteen he was married to a daughter of Lord Coventry, and at nineteen became member for Tewkesbury. He was a man of great discernment. "I never knew any one," said his friend Locke, "to penetrate so quick into men's breasts, and, from a small opening, survey that dark cabinet." Whether he made a laudable use of that power has been a matter of some dispute. Of his acumen the following proof is given by the same high source. Soon after the Restoration, Shaftesbury and Lord Southampton were dining with the Earl of Clarendon. The Lady Anne Hyde, who had recently married the Duke of York, was present. As the two noblemen went home, Shaftesbury remarked, "Mrs. Anne Hyde is certainly married to one of the brothers." "How," asked his companion, "can you tell?" "Be assured," replied Ashley, "that it is so. A concealed respect showed itself so plainly in the looks, voice, and manner of her mother when she carved to her, or offered her any dish, that it must be so."

Ashley commenced his political career as a Royalist, but, for reasons too long here to rehearse, became a

Parliamentarian officer, the civil and military employments being generally combined in those turbulent days; Ashley had even the command of 1500 soldiers. But his opinions were in favour of a monarchical government, and he spoke ably and effectively in parliament, after the death of Oliver Cromwell. "For he had," says Burnet, "a wonderful faculty in speaking to a popular assembly, and could mix both the facetious and serious way of arguing very agreeably." He was, indeed, unequalled in the art of governing parties, and was one of the principal promoters of the exertions of General Monk. His conduct excited the indignation of Sir Arthur Haslerigg, who, with an angry countenance, exclaimed, when he saw the secluded member restored to the House of Commons, "This is your doing, but it shall cost blood." "Your own," replied Sir Anthony, "if you please, but Sir Anthony Ashley Cooper will not be secured this morning." The result was a determination to secure Sir Anthony and others; but Ashley was saved by Monk's wife, who had heard part of the discourse, in those days of tapestried chambers, behind the hangings, and who sent her brother Clarges to warn Sir Anthony to escape. Monk was privy to this scheme, but was afterwards won over by Ashley to his own views; and the Restoration was effected. Of that event Monk had the credit; but Ashley is supposed justly to have been the real mover and contriver. The plan had been devised by him, according to Locke's account, some time before.

Ashley repaired with the other commissioners to

Charles at Breda. It was during this journey that an accident befell him, to which he attributed the formation of a serious disease; it also procured him the acquaintance of Locke. In passing through a town in Holland he was overturned. He sent for a physician, Dr. Thomas, who, instead of obeying the summons, sent John Locke, then a student of Christ Church, but practising medicine. Ashley, courteous as he always was, entered into conversation with the pale philosopher, and invited him to supper. He found him to be a man of rare acquirements, and he had the sense to value them. Locke became his secretary; nor when Ashley ceased to be chancellor was the union between them dissolved; and Locke remained in the house of his patron with an annuity of 100*l.* a-year. The connection was important and invaluable to both those great men.

For some years after the Restoration, Ashley's career was one of uninterrupted prosperity. He was made Chancellor of the Exchequer and under-treasurer, and was created Baron Ashley; and in the preamble to his patent it was acknowledged "that the Restoration was chiefly owing to him."

During the turmoils of politics, and in the midst of his rivalry with Clarendon, Ashley solaced himself by occasional snatches of literature. His sketch of the character of Mr. Hastings, a graphic portrait of a country squire of those times, is the only specimen published; it was printed in the *Connoisseur*, and is eulogised by Horace Walpole for the truth of its de-

lineation. The character, with all its grossness and its virtues, pretty equally balanced, has not decayed away amongst us, but depicts a different class of individuals, and belongs rather to the yeoman, or gentleman farmer of modern times, than to the country gentleman, refined as he actually is by travel, and having imbibed London manners and adopted London hours.

Corrupt as were all public men at that era, Ashley appears not to have been so utterly depraved and venal as the rest of his associates. It is true that he gave in, after some show of reluctance, to the *Traité simulé* with France, whereby, according to Sir John Dalrymple, Charles II. was to have 200,000*l.* from France for declaring himself a Catholic, and an annuity of 800,000 francs during the Dutch war; but Ashley is said to have been the only member of the Cabal who never touched French gold. Buckingham, his patron and his intimate, was, alas! (for so agreeable a sinner) shamelessly and extravagantly bribed, even Lady Shrewsbury, his paramour, being in the pay of France, and having, for a consideration, promised to make the duke do whatsoever was required by Louis XIV. A golden shower fell, indeed, upon the wives and favourites of the Cabal. The Duke of York was, there is every reason to be assured, the active, pervading spirit of that whole confederacy. Ashley, it is well known, was no favourer of that part of the plot which related to the establishment of Popery. One day, being commanded by the king to meet him at Lord Arlington's lodgings

in Whitehall, Ashley found his most sacred majesty, the defender of the faith, a little the more communicative for having dined with Buckingham and the Duke of York. It was then that he discovered the king's sentiments, and that he saw, as he observed to a friend, that a black cloud was impending over England. Afterwards, when the Cabal, never so firmly united as it was supposed,—for Buckingham and Arlington hated each other at all times,—broke down; these men, so thoroughly corrupt, yet so remarkably agreeable, were turned for the time into friends. "The Lapland knots are untied," wrote Ashley to a friend, "and we are in horrid storms; those that hunted together now hunt one another; but at horse-play the master of the horse must have the better." Alluding to Buckingham's appointment as master of the horse.

After the dismissal of Lauderdale and the impeachment of Arlington, Shaftesbury, whose conduct on this occasion has been defended (and it *requires* defence) retired to his seat at St. Giles's, Wimborne, Dorsetshire. Here he lived with dignity and hospitality. He was one of the most fascinating men of his time, and his conversational powers were such that Charles II. delighted in his society. Therefore we may assume that his discourse was not of the most straightlaced character. In his leisure Shaftesbury occupied himself in beginning an improvement of the Liturgy for the consideration of the bishops, for he conceived that it was not so sacred "being drawn up by men the other day," that it might not be improved. Amongst the fragments

of his papers there is a selection of psalms for particular services in the church, said to be admirably chosen. Such and so various was his knowledge, and so true was King Charles's remark "that Shaftesbury had more law than all his judges and more divinity than all his bishops." But the days of Shaftesbury were not destined to be passed in peaceful lucubrations. In 1676-7 he was imprisoned in the Tower with Buckingham for a breach of privilege of the House of Lords, and was confined there long after his fellow-prisoners had been released. He calls himself, in one of his letters at this time, "an infirm old man shut up in a winter's prison." And, indeed, his confinement was a most oppressive act. But he was henceforth the subject of plots, and the victim, a sturdy one nevertheless, of cabals and intrigues; and his conduct, in relation to the Bill of Exclusion, drawn by Shaftesbury, and his espousal of the cause of the Duke of Monmouth, sent him again to the Tower. This time he was followed by crowds of well-wishers among the people. "God bless your lordship," cried one of them, "and deliver you from your enemies." "I thank you, sir," replied the aged statesman, with a smile, "I have nothing to fear; they have. Therefore pray to God to deliver them from me."

A few days afterwards, on receiving a visit from one of the Roman Catholic lords, he observed in reply to a question pretending surprise at his being in the Tower, "I have been lately indisposed with an ague, and came hither to take some Jesuit's powder" (bark). He was

indicted for high treason, but the grand-jury, consisting of London citizens and merchants, threw out the bill, and bonfires and bells celebrated his safety, as the safety of the Protestant religion in England. Charles, as it is well known, was greatly irritated at his defeat. "I am the last man," he remarked, bitterly, "to have law and justice in the whole nation." So blinded does the moral sense become; nor did the monarch deem it beneath him to suggest to Dryden, then starving, the poem of the "Medal," in which, for a hundred broad pieces, that great perverted genius penned another anathema against Shaftesbury. The "Medal" was dedicated to the Whigs. "Rail at me abundantly," said Dryden, in his dedication; "and not to break custom, do it without wit."

Shaftesbury was playing at cards with his countess when he was informed that the bill was thrown out. He then braced himself for action, and endeavoured to incite the people to an insurrection. Such were now —so mutable is human nature—the sentiments of a man who was once in the dark secrets of the Cabal. He jested upon his age and infirmities, and, offering to head the revolt, remarked that he could not run away, but could die at the head of the people better than on a scaffold. He was soon obliged to fly the kingdom, and, disguising himself as a Presbyterian minister, he took a last leave of his lady and his friends, and escaped to Harwich, and thence to Amsterdam. Here he intended to reside, but fate willed it otherwise. He was attacked by the gout, and died an exile

from his country, as, unhappily, too many better men than he in those days were obliged to do, on the 21st January, 1683. A ship, hung with mourning and adorned with streamers and escutcheons, conveyed his remains to England. Inconsistent and scheming, yet not venal, Shaftesbury has found some advocates. He was, however, a subtle if not a bad man, of doubtful patriotism, which only sprang up when court favour deserted him, and of principles dubious in all things. That he was the friend and patron of Locke is the best eulogium; that he was the promoter of religious toleration his clearest merit. Yet it was, perhaps, too truly said of Shaftesbury that "he made the pretences of liberty the stirrup to get up, and religion the steed he rode in pursuit of his monstrous designs." To Shaftesbury we owe the Habeas Corpus Act, and an endeavour, at that time unsuccessful, to render the judges independent of the crown. His forbearance or indifference to the satires of Dryden, who makes him the hero of his "Absalom" and "Ahithophel" is worthy of admiration, for severe was the law of libel in those days.

In his religious opinions Shaftesbury was suspected of deism. One day, as Speaker Onslow relates, he was speaking in a low voice to a friend whilst a female relation sat in a distant part of the room. Forgetting the lady's presence, Shaftesbury at last remarked, "Men of sense are all of one religion." The lady turned round quickly, "And what religion is that?" "That, madam," answered the earl, quickly, "men of sense will never tell." It is remarkable that the son of

this gifted man was nearly a fool, and that nature, resting awhile, as it seemed, produced not until the next generation an intellect worthy of being akin to that of the first Earl of Shaftesbury.

Such was the Cabal. "For awhile it had sailed with a prosperous gale," so says Rapin, whom the interest of the subject has betrayed into a simile, "on a shore famous for shipwrecks without meeting any impediments. But at last they were stopped in their course by a rock which it was not possible to avoid—I mean the parliament." The Cabal was dissolved 1672-3, when the utter shamelessness of the men who composed it was manifest. Shaftesbury, as we have seen, gave up his former associates upon pretext of patriotism; Arlington disgracefully deserted his party; Clifford resigned his office as treasurer and died; Buckingham, by all manner of treacheries and falsehoods, saved himself from impeachment. When the king and the Duke of York heard the debates in the House of Lords, at which it was then customary for the royal family to attend, the latter whispered to his royal brother, while Shaftesbury was speaking, "What a rogue have you of a lord-chancellor!" to which the king replied, "And what a fool of a lord-treasurer!"

To return to the Lauderdales, the defeat of the Cabal broke one proud heart in Ham House, and, sinking under the weight of age, vexation, and infirmities, the duke died in August 1682. He was succeeded by his brother as Earl of Lauderdale, but his English titles became extinct.

The duchess lingered at Ham, where she, too, died in 1698, during a weary widowhood, for no third claimant to her hand appeared. Her eldest son, Lionel Talmache, succeeded her; and her second, Thomas, distinguished himself at the taking of Athlone and the battle of Aghrim. He was killed, however, at Brest, four months previous to his mother's death.

A long line of the Talmache family, all named Lionel, have since been the owners of Ham House, yet the glory of the place has been in some measure diminished, for Helingham has been the chief seat of the family since the death of the Duchess of Lauderdale. James II., upon the arrival of his son-in-law the Prince of Orange, was ordered to retire to Ham House, but he deemed an abode so near the metropolis unsafe, and fled to France.

CHAP. III.

HAMPTON COURT, PAST AND PRESENT.

My chronicle of Ham House is ended. Not so, however, my rambles, and if you please, I will continue my researches in that neighbourhood, so rich in its traditions, its old houses, and its haunts of the gay, the learned, and the brave.

I had taken up my abode in a spot quite congenial to the taste of one who, like myself, is a worshipper in imagination of strong-holds, and embattled towers, and has a weakness for palaces, but prefers *living* in a cottage. Alas! *my* cottage is a villa now. Those low ivy-mantled walls have been raised and stuccoed. The latticed windows, under which the swallow built, have been made into respectable *croisées*—the elm tree which shaded the lawn has a china-bottomed seat beneath it—ponds have been filled up with sanitary care,—and a smart footman appears at the gate, which was in my time a wicket, and which in my time always stood open, or (I was going to say), opened of its own accord.

It was July: the mowing grass was cut, I remember, and lay in rows on the upland meadow beyond the lawn, and the white lilac tree that used to look like an apparition in the moonshine had shed its delicate

flowers on the turf below, into the dell, where, in my bed of bog-plants, rhododendrons were then flowering.

A cool evening and the plashing of the ferryman's oar tempted me to cross from the low-browed inn at Thames Ditton, to the opposite side of the river. I write of a period some twenty years ago, when the noted Swan was the respectable ale-house of the village, a place of retreat for needy wits in search of cheap country air; more of a ferryhouse than even of an ale-house, or scarcely pretending, indeed, to that degree; a convenient resort, not so much for the servants of Boyle Farm, whose green slopes stretch almost adjacent to it, as for the servants' servants, the groom's helper, the under-gardener's under boy—the small coin of creation.

"I advise you, sir," said a hale man, with a ruddy face, lighted up by the beams of the setting sun, "to take with you the key to the Water Gallery, and you will then be nigh the palace."

Now the Water Gallery is a long grass walk, even, as if just mown, I was going to write as if just shaved, and then ironed down, I might say, and it stretches along a sort of terrace, from a point nearly opposite the Swan, until it merges into the dark and solemn avenues of the palace garden. I took the hint, pocketed the key, and surrendered myself to the pleasing inanition of being rowed by my friend the waterman. My mind was for repose: it was full of Wolsey, and Cavendish, and the Charleses, and the Jameses, and the William and Mary; but my waterman was resolved to tie me

down to the present century, to confine my meditations to *his* theme, his historical recollections: he willed it, and it was so.

His theme, and the incident of his life, was the famous ball of Boyle Farm, that event, so worthy in its accomplishment and its actor, of the days of De Grammont. The accomplished unhappy president, its too-fascinating master of the revels, and chronicler in verse of the scene, its lovely, high-born visitants, and every association, recalls the days of a livelier England than *our* England; and our boatman described it well.

"There," he told me, pointing to two stately trees, the lower branches of which swept the lawn of Boyle Farm, "stood the tent, and there sat the bands." The trees, according to his account, were all lit up with lamps, which were reflected in their many hues in the dark river; and white dresses were seen floating on the summer gale, and disappearing in dark alleys, and the sound of young voices was heard, and the music struck up, and gradually the shades of evening darkened into night. And then broke the fireworks from that terrace, and all the assembly were disclosed, with sudden illumination, to the many gazers from the river; "for the river," added my Charon, with enthusiasm, "was like a fair for boats, thick as ——" we now neared the shore, he sighed, and cast about for a similitude, "them stones there, and as still as them, too, for many a one staid on the river till daybreak." He planted his hook on the ground as he spoke, and towed the heavy ferry-boat to. "Them were fine

days for watermen," he added with another sigh; and closing our conversation with the customary anathemas against steam, the good man told me how he had been induced, by the fashion of that bewitching circle, centred in what was called, with ostentatious modesty, Boyle Farm, to bring up six sons to the aquatic profession, and that two of them were the king's watermen —an empty honour, I fear, but a consolatory distinction.

I quitted him, and moved into the Water Gallery, framed by Wolsey. This noble terrace proved afterwards peculiarly adapted to the taste of William and Mary, who certainly had but one soul between them as well as one crown. The massive yews are said to have been planted by the great Cardinal; but in the reign of William and Mary the heavy gates were fashioned, decorated with the insignia of royalty on each of them; for as that worthy couple had had some trouble in obtaining those insignia, so they were vastly desirous to display them to the fullest. And beautiful gates they are, adorned with the rose, and thistle, and shamrock, and, methinks, the fleur-de-lis of France also. And they open into the Home Park, or, rather, one of them opens; the rest appear not to have been formed for that purpose, but merely to keep each other company.

However infirm their title to the throne, William and Mary had a vastly fine notion of the dignity that is requisite to support a royal station. As I paced onwards to the palace I pictured to myself Mary, with her hard,

masculine features, her majestic figure, her long, fair throat, encircled by the accustomed string of heavy pearls, her scarf of *her* favourite (or Sir Godfrey Kneller's favourite) deep blue, her russet dress, sweeping the green sward, and long and over-modest in its length; sailing rather than walking, came she, in my mind's eye, along the Water Gallery, her maids of honour, fresh from the strictures of Tillotson or the perusal of Strype, sedate and downcast behind her; whilst one, more forward than the rest, the Lady Orkney, whom William esteemed it his duty to admire, paced audaciously near the king. And then I heard, in imagination, the hard, dry cough, specified by Burnet, and I could conjure up accents of Dutch, French, or of imperfect English; and I saw the short, slight, drooping form coming towards me, yet with firm step, and I met the gaze of that eagle eye, and beheld the hawk visage, stern yet not without a glance of kindness in that piercing gaze; and I saw his pale cheek, unrefreshed by the river breeze, and I perceived that on that cheek wrinkles were already formed, and the dearly-purchased privilege of ruling had not produced peace of mind.

I awoke from my reverie to find myself very near the end of the Water Gallery and the beginning of the palace gardens. I leaned over the low wall on the embankments for a while. Beneath me was the towing-path, which, until the last two years, was precisely the same as in Wolsey's time. Of late a broad, neat towing-walk, encroaching, alas! greatly on the breadth of the river, and superseding the ancient, sedgy, winding

borders, has been framed. As I gazed upon the pleasure-boats softly descending, almost by the force of the current alone, towards Thames Ditton, the unpretending tower of that village church rose to view above some willows on the river's brink. Within that lowly edifice there are remains of former importance; there is a confessional, elaborately constructed, and in full preservation, which contains the remains of—who do you think, good reader?—the great Wolsey's head cook, who condescended to be buried within Thames Ditton Church.

There were lights now in the Swan, and the chimes of Kingston Church sounded, sweet and full, along the river; even the ferry-boat, returning from a fresh excursion, became dim. I hastened into the gardens to catch the parting fragrance of its luxuriant flowers, and to gaze, before it was obscured, upon that façade by Wren, which you approach from the entrance through the Water Gallery.

Impressed with the dignity of the theme, in love with the romance of its associations, interested in the past, disgusted with its present state, I here set down some facts and impressions which have been gleaned from various sources relative to this princely residence.

No one now thinks about the antiquity of Hampton Court, which seems to have been the creation of Wolsey, who, as we ordinarily suppose, fixed upon its flat locality for the site of a palace. As we look at the garden front, more French than English, of heavy grandeur, and with a sort of vulgar importance about it, we little dream

that this was once—not yesterday, certainly, but in the twelfth century—a preceptory, in which resided a sister of the order of St. John. She was removed to some other spot, and the consecrated ground on which she had been planted was bestowed upon the Knights Hospitallers of the order of St. John of Jerusalem, who had a manor or a mansion here.

I have sometimes wondered what reasons induced Wolsey to turn his eyes towards this manor with greedy look, or to choose this site for his kingly designs; for the land about it is a dead flat, and there are many more beautiful spots on the river side; but then, be it remembered, he got it for nothing. For when, in the early part of the reign of Henry VIII., the Cardinal obtained a lease of the manor of Hampton from the priors of St. John, it is more than probable that he designed the suppression of the monasteries, or foresaw, by his shrewd and penetrating mind, that the spirit of the nation *would* doom them to destruction. There were, besides, great advantages in the acquisition, comprising as it did many other manors, Walton-on-Thames, Walton Legh, Byflete, Esher, Oatlands, and half a score more. On the suppression of the knights, the fee of the manor of Hampton was retained by the crown, and this, the gift originally of the Lady Joan Gray to the Hospitallers, has since remained annexed to the crown. The estate, thus secured to the English public by a sort of rapine, had increased marvellously in value since the records termed "Doomsday" had been enrolled. Then it only answered to thirty-five

hides, and paid the modest tribute of three shillings annually for the privilege of fishing and laying nets in the river.

One fancy which I have respecting the motives of Wolsey in choosing to erect his palace on the site of the Knights Hospitallers, may produce a smile. None better knew the value of birth than this low-born man. This ancient brotherhood could only be entered by such as could produce undeniable testimonies of noble origin: four proofs were required, the testimonial, the literal, the local, and the secret. The English knights were a sort of offset or supplement to the grand institution at Malta. It is possible that a sense of fitness, a mixture of reverence for rank, and fondness for the half military, half religious character of these knights, may have rendered the manor of Hampton a suitable place in Wolsey's eyes for the display of his own grandeur and for the reception of kings.

The persecuted knights, as their historian Boisgueslin tells us, fled to Malta, where they were kindly received and consoled; and the workmen of Wolsey, himself the architect, were soon seen where the long robes of the knights decorated with the Maltese cross, and the sons of some of the best families in England, had dwelt in honour.

The place lay conveniently for the cardinal's access, when, during the short time of his holding the bishopric of Winchester, Esher Place was his residence; and thence he might have ridden any fine morning to Hampton, passing through his own manors of Moulsey,

and being ferried in one of his barges across, for no bridge was erected until many years afterwards. And then were completed those five courts, of which two, intended as offices to others, alone remain. Tudor despotism, succeeded by Guelphic *taste*, have marred the grandest plan that ever was contemplated in this country. The first court is perfect, with a good deal of the college air in it; the second, alas! is disgraced by a column of Ionic pillars, the design of the infatuated Wren, one of the many men ruined by a madness for the classical.

Leaving architectural discussions to other hands, and merely remarking with an unspeakable bitterness of feeling, that Hampton Court was, in Queen Elizabeth's time, pronounced by Hentzner to have been as noble and uniform a pile, and as capacious, as any Gothic architecture can have made it; let us think of it as the scene of unprecedented ecclesiastical and political power: the last specimen of that household magnificence which priesthood could compass when conjoined with civil dignity.

Conceive the palace to have consisted of those five courts, three of which afterwards fell into decay; suppose them to have been constructed all of that fine red brick, of which the remaining are composed; fancy the present courts as in the character of hand-maidens to the others, which reached to the tennis-court; comprehend that these courts contained one thousand five hundred chambers, were provided with two hundred and eighty silk beds for visitors of superior

ranks, and were furnished with one thousand retainers, and some notion may be formed of the style in which the cardinal lived in the zenith of his power. Then look at the old chimneys, and view their solidity and size; peep up the immense fire-places in the offices,—in each of these an ox might be roasted whole. Enter the front hall, and picture to yourself its three boards, with three different officers; its steward, who was a priest; its treasurer, a knight; its comptroller, who was an esquire. Then, to provide against the sins and excesses of the banquet, there was a confessor and a doctor, besides marshals and ushers of the hall to keep the peace, and almoners to dole out the broken fragments of the feast to mendicants at the door. Go then into the kitchens, into which none of the retainers were allowed to enter, and see the master cook walking about in velvet or satin, wearing a gold chain; count, if you can, all the yeomen, and grooms, and clerks, and assistants, yeomen of the stirrup, farriers, and *maltours*, each keeping four horses. But this is vulgar state compared with the personal dignity and exquisiteness of the great lord of the whole, with his nine or ten lords, the flower of the nation; they, with their two or three servants. Then his chief chamberlain, and his gentlemen-ushers, his gentlemen-waiters, his gentlemen-cupbearers, all men of degree, and I will engage, handsome too, for the cardinal understood stage effect; then his twelve doctors and chaplains, his clerk of the closet, his secretaries, his two clerks of the signet, and four counsellors learned in

the law. Suppose them even on ordinary occasions crossing those stately courts, and wonder, if you may, at the jealousy of Henry VIII.

I say little of Wolsey's riding-clerk, or of his fourteen footmen, garnished with rich riding coats; his herald-at-arms; his four minstrels; though one can see him in imagination riding forth from the gateway of his palace upon his mule, his "short lusty figure," as some one has ill-naturedly described him, borrowing from the majesty of his intellect its sole grace; and we can follow him in thought towards Esher Place, his retreat, his cottage, as it were, to recruit the spirits all on the stretch at Hampton Court; or journeying in sober pace to London, avoiding the important town of Kingston—so much was his reason bowed down before the superstitions of his time—and the man who planned Hampton Court and Christ Church turned pale at the mention of a prediction that Kingston was a fatal name to him, and fatal it was. Yet the weakness does him no harm in our affections, whilst it betrays and challenges our pity the while, the inward sense of insecurity, for the perturbed mind which fixed itself on shadows, the mournful conviction that life "was but a stage."

Nor were the pleasures of the field wanting to give relief to the enervating luxury of the palace. Becoming immensely corpulent, Henry, unable longer to hunt in the forest, passed an act of parliament (it is no use expressing it any other way, *he was* the parliament) for making a royal chase at Hampton Court; quietly seizing several parishes on the other side of the Thames, stocking them with deer, and impaling the whole; and

although, in the time of his son, this usurpation was partly set aside, the crown has still a right to all the game in those parishes, and the chase, lessened in its extent, exists still; Long Ditton and the neighbourhood of Kingston included. Wolsey, like other churchmen, whether he hunted himself or not, encouraged the chase, as did Cranmer, who was called the "rough rider;" and, accordingly, when the French ambassadors came to Hampton Court, the festivities there were prefaced by a hunt; and the French ambassadors, after being regaled by the mayor of London "with wines, sugars, beaves, mutton, capons, and wild fowle," as Cavendish certifies, removed to Hampton Court, there to be entertained with unprecedented splendour, the fame of which was yet the theme of foreign courts when Wolsey was on his death-bed.

Meantime there had been such a preparation at the palace for the reception of these foreigners as had never been known before, nor, after the dynasty of the Tudors was run out, was ever again known in England; and Wolsey had the good fortune to possess among his gentlemen-ushers one capable from his acquirements of chronicling the whole, and certain, from his affection to his master, to colour his narrative with favourable tints. Such was Sir William Cavendish, whose pains, according to his own account, "were not small nor light," but who was daily travelling up and down from chamber to chamber; for the principal officers of the household had been commanded "neither to spare for any cost, expense, or travayle, to make

such a triumphant banquet as they might not only wonder at it here, but also make a glorious report of it in their own country, to the great honour of the king and his realm." Sagacious and crafty cardinal!

And a banquet, such as nations might marvel at, it was. And the Frenchmen were, says Cavendish, as it seemed, "rapt in a heavenly paradise;" and then to see the great Wolsey in the midst of all this magnificence, calling for a chair, and sitting down in the centre of all this paradise, laughing heartily, gave to the scene that without which all such gorgeous displays must be cold and joyless — the spirit of joyous hospitality. But, alas! already the canker was in the rose; and all this pomp and state, too mighty for a subject, hastened the events that followed; and after this, observes the gentleman-usher, "began new matters which troubled the heads and imaginations of all the court;" and the smothered fire of Henry's passion for Anne Boleyn flamed out, and finally consumed the cardinal.

With the fall of the cardinal began the decline of Hampton Court; not that the long neglect which has been the disgrace of modern times was then apparent, but the importance of the place as a palace decayed away. The first symptom of royal jealousy had been appeased by the present from Wolsey of this place, with all its appurtenances, to the king — a sacrifice which was repaid by the gracious permission for him "to lie in his palace at Richmond at certain times." Upon the final ruin of the cardinal, Henry chose to assume to himself the distinction of having erected Hampton Court; and

when in 1540, an act was passed for creating the honour of Hampton Court, the preamble stated, that "it had pleased the king to erect, build, and make a goodly, sumptuous, beautiful, and princely manor, decent, and convenient for a king," on this spot. Destined, it is true, for a time, to receive, but only in his decline, the king, under its roof, the palace became henceforth the scene of royal accouchements, the nursery and school-house of young princes. Before its now annihilated courts began to totter to their fall, Edward VI. first saw the light in its chambers; and in one of them his young mother expired in her anguish. A gloom hung over the pile, now only tenanted at times by its royal owners; the spirit of Wolsey seemed to hover in vengeance over it; for the next scene enacted here was the appearance of Catherine Howard as queen. Undismayed by the fate which seemed to hang over all that was here performed, Henry gave his hand to Katharine Parr in the chapel of Hampton Court, and kept the Christmas ensuing, that of 1543, here; but the hall which had witnessed the splendour of Wolsey was but dimly lighted up with the festivities of that heartless and politic marriage. One incident of romance, however, gives a lingering interest to that very hall. On one of the panes of that window situated on one side of the dais, at the upper end of the hall, and beneath a ceiling of beautiful workmanship, Henry Howard, Earl of Surrey, loitering among the courtiers, wrote some lines with a diamond, on the fair Geraldine, which first aroused the suspicions of Henry, and directed them to

the earl — another sad incident which seemed to turn all in that house to melancholy.

The next sombre visitants were Philip and Mary, who were not of a temper to kindle new merriment in the silent chambers of the often-deserted palace. But in the succeeding reign, Hampton Court was again the scene of good cheer and gay hearts. A play, said, I know not on what authority, to have been Henry VIII., was acted before her majesty, and Shakspeare is stated to have been one of the actors in it; and the hall in the day-time rang with the game of tables, and resounded to the laughter of courtiers, while the withdrawing-room, into which you enter by a door upon the dais, and which delighted Sir Walter Scott by the perfection of its proportions and the richness of its ceiling, and provoked the thought of an imitative chamber at Abbotsford, decorated with pendent ornaments, the cognisances of the Tudors, received the manly dignity of the queen, here troubled by rumours of conspiracies, contrived, as it was the fashion to surmise, by Mary of Scotland.

Her Christmasings were closed in death, and the next time that the walls of Wolsey's palace echoed to a royal voice it was to that of James I., as with a wisdom which, as Archbishop Whitgift protested, proceeded from the special assistance of God's Spirit, he acted as moderator to the conference between Presbyterians and the members of the English hierarchy.

This celebrated meeting was held within the withdrawing-room of the privy-chamber, with all the lords

of the privy council assisting. And then James, in his capacious garments, his quilted stiletto-proof doublets, and his plaided breeches, thus delivered his opinion, whilst his rolling eye fixed itself, without any regard to the shame of those thus gazed upon, on any stranger: —

"If you aim at a Scottish presbytery, it agrees as well with monarchy," lisped the monarch; "as God and the devil. Then Jack and Will, &c., and Dick, shall meet, and at their pleasure censure me and my council. Therefore I reiterate my former speech, '*Le roi s'avisera.*' Stay, I pray, for seven years before you demand, and then, if you find me grow pursy and fat, I may, perchance, hearken to you, for that government will keep me in breath and find me work enough."

Even whilst James thus exposed himself to derision, there was formed in the seclusion of those very chambers a mind singularly refined for the period, and there expanded a heart which inherited only the weaknesses, and not the vices, of the king. A weakly and even almost deformed child, the park of Hampton was the accustomed haunt of the ill-fated Charles I., and he was long in the seclusion of the place which served successively as his nursery, the scene of his honeymoon, and his prison. There is an elm near the stud-house in the park which still bears the name of King Charles's swing. One can picture to one's self the delicate yet princely boy hunting in the chase; for his exercises, as Sir Philip Warwick affirms, "were manly, and he rid the great horse very well, and on the

little saddle he was not only adroit, but a laborious hunter or fieldman."

Charles, however, seems not to have been fond of the palace, and only to have taken refuge in it in after years either for the privacy of his honeymoon, or when driven to it, as in 1625, by the plague, when he gave audience here to foreign ambassadors. Amid its dreary and mouldering courts he was afterwards immured, taunted with the semblance of respect, and attended by the parliament commissioners, yet ever and anon terrified by receiving little anonymous billets, which advertised him of wicked designs on his life; one of them, the intimation of the Hampton Court conspiracy, "together with the horrid resolution of one George Greenland, corporal, who, in the space of three dayes, did undertake to murder his majesty at Hampton Court."

"More than king-catching herein you may spy,
King-killing Hampton Court's conspiracy."

But, as Cromwell wrote to his confidant Hammond, "My dear friend, let us look into providences; surely they mean somewhat;" the king was reserved for a less miserable fate than that of private assassination.

During Charles's imprisonment at Hampton Court it again assumed the appearance of a court, having been previously prepared for his reception by the yeomen of the wardrobe. His chaplains were here to do their duty, the nobility had access to him, and, what he more valued, he was permitted at times to visit his children,

who were in the custody of Lord Northumberland at Sion House. Distrusting, as well he might, this semblance of kindness, Charles formed a resolution to escape, and effected it with so little difficulty as to have given the impression that Cromwell connived at the scheme. One evening — it was his practice before prayers to be alone for a time — he was longer than usual in his devotions. At first there were no suspicions; these were, however, awakened by the repeated crying of a greyhound. Then it was found that the king was gone. He had escaped by a part of the gardens called Paradise, and had slipped away in the twilight. His attendant, Ashburnham, who had resided during the king's stay at Ditton, was then sent for, when it was found that he had made off some days before, and that all his household stuff had been sold. Some say the king reached Bagshot that very night, having given 20*l.* for a guide. The rooms from which the king escaped are situated near the chapel, where often his devotions were proffered on bended knees.

The palace was now long empty, and narrowly escaped being sold by the parliamentary commissioners. Cromwell, however, looked upon it as a convenient residence; it was stayed from sale in 1653; and the Protector built the Toy Inn for his Roundhead soldiers, and put up the wretched cavalry barracks in the palace-yard for his body-guard. And then the great man of the day took up his abode in Wolsey's fabric. How would the spirit of the cardinal have chafed had it been conscious of such presence! and here were to be heard

in public, admonitions to "war with fleshly reasonings," to "wait for the redemption," and all that traffic with religious matters that hypocrisy has need of. Here was Elizabeth Cromwell publicly married to the Lord Falconberg. But all was not triumph; conscience, pointed by the voice of a favourite daughter, haunted the man who began a career upon a small stock of principle, but was made a villain by success. In the chambers of the old palace expired Mrs. Claypole, who in her delirium taxed her father with his crimes; and here his powerful mind, impressed by a prediction that when his dog had died in a certain room, once inhabited by Charles, that his own glory should depart from him, Cromwell's last illness commenced.

General Monk, after the Restoration, received a present of Hampton Court; but accepted a sum of money, and gave it back to the crown. And another honeymoon, rather different to the love-passages which must have taken place between Charles and Henrietta, was soon enacted here, and where the tendril-like curls of that lovely and loved one had shaken in the breeze, a train of Portuguese ladies, in their monstrous fardingals, or guarde infantos, their complexions "olivador and sufficiently unagreeable" (according to Evelyn), paraded their clumsy forms. Such was the retinue of Katharine of Braganza, who had been married, about a week before, to Charles II. And here came the king and probably Lady Castlemaine. And hither was brought the famous bed, an embroidery of silver on crimson velvet, a present from the States of Holland to

the king, costing 8000*l.* And the royal chamber was enriched, too, by a great looking-glass and toilet of beaten gold, a gift of Henrietta Maria. Cabinets, brought from Portugal, enriched the hall, which was then in daily use, and the whole palace was nobly furnished. The park was at this time planted with limes in rows, and the canal was completed, and syrens and statues, cast in copper by Fanelli, were scattered about the gardens. There was a fountain; yet, observes Evelyn, "no plenty of water." This deficiency of springs and the hardness of all water not carried from the river is, indeed, one evil of that neighbourhood. Wolsey, at a vast expense by conduits built on the high grounds of Combe Warren, on the opposite side of the river, had the water in his time conveyed to Hampton Court in leaden pipes, each of them weighing twenty-six pounds; and he procured also an additional supply from a branch of the river Colne at ten miles' distance. Why he did not avail himself of the Thames is by no means manifest.

The gardens were, however, very confined; yet many a revel was held in them during the gay rule of Charles II.; and the parterre, which they called Paradise, whence his father escaped, and a banqueting-house set over a cave, or cellar, were the scenes of many a carousal which distanced Wolsey's entertainments, if not in splendour, yet in the license permitted to the guests.

All was over; the butterflies of Charles's court were smashed in an hour, and James, ill-treating his

young, high-minded, and loving wife, brought his court to the palace, and there received the pope's nuncio. Brief and joyless was his career, and many, perhaps, thought nothing *could* be gloomier than his reign. They were mistaken. William came. He came and saw. Was it the dead flat of the palace gardens that recalled his beloved Holland and attracted him? Or was it the sombre grandeur of its courts, or the seclusion from subjects whom he loved not, or courtiers whom he despised? Kensington was even too cheerful for him. Unhappily for Hampton Court, Queen Mary had pretensions to a taste. This was a national misfortune. She cast her eyes upon the palace, and observing how pleasantly it was situated, proposed improvements. But the work of demolition was first necessary, and in 1690 the principal part of the old fabric facing the Home Park was taken down; the rest, those two fine courts which remain, were only spared for convenience until the whole should be completed on the plan approved by the queen. Sir Christopher Wren, who was appointed after the great fire of London surveyor-general of the works, sent in his "plans, elevations, and sections of two new royal apartments at Hampton Court, being a part only of the surveyor's design for a new palace there;" the word apartment being used in the French sense, and meaning a distinct suite of rooms.

As the great design of Wolsey, mutilated, sank brick by brick to the earth, so the impertinent construction by Wren arose. He had not spent the early part of

his architectural life in Paris to no purpose, and it was natural for him to accommodate himself to the foreign tastes of his employers. Queen Mary's judgment was pronounced by the flatterers of the day to be exquisite, and she loved to discourse with the knight upon architecture, mathematics, and literature of the useful kind; for her head was as manly as her heart, and she possessed in perfection those acquirements which make woman, sometimes to the cost of others, a reasoning, disagreeable being.

The third great quadrangle chiefly comprises the buildings by Wren. The south and east sides of this court were entirely taken down, and the present state rooms were erected. The west and north sides — comprising a room of communication 109 feet in length, and the queen's guard-room and presence-chamber — retain marks of the ancient structure; but a new façade was given to the whole. In four years, just before the death of Queen Mary, the two "apartments," as they were called, were completed: that fronting the Home Park being the queen's; whilst the king's apartment, fronting the Privy Garden, overlooked the Thames. To form an access to this, Wren erected a portico of ninety feet long, consisting of a colonnade of Ionic pillars, which rose amid the embattled parapets of Wolsey's structure. Similar enormity was contemplated by Kent, who proposed extending a twin colonnade along the opposite side of the court; but he was prevented by Sir Robert Walpole. The apartments, when completed, were highly approved of by King

William, who was heard, writes the grandson of Sir Christopher Wren in the "Parentalia," "once particularly, in the hearing of some noble persons of the first quality in England, to say, that these two apartments, for good proportion, state, and convenience jointly, were not to be paralleled by any palace in Europe." "And," observes the editor of Camden's "Britannia," "the additions made to it by King William and Queen Mary do so far excel what it was before, that they evidently shew what vast advancements architecture has received since that time."

The mathematical mind of the queen and the congenial precision of the king were next exhibited in the fashioning of the garden. Lawns were soon shaped out, intersected with broad gravel-walks, and yews were planted at set distances. London and Wise, the royal gardeners, have the merit or de-merit of the design, hallowed by King William's approval. To him, to borrow from a modern poet, was

"All the world a drill;"

and Nature's scenes served little other purpose than to be cut up into trenches, or made serviceable to war or state. The chief walk was decorated with statues and vases, and one of the vases was executed by Caius Gabriel Cibber, in competition with a foreigner, who executed the other: these have been mercilessly removed to Windsor. To complete the history of Wren's share in Hampton Court, it must first be mentioned that he built the ranger's house, called the

Pavilion, near the river; and then, covered, in his own day, with glory, which on many accounts will ever exalt his name, he fixed himself in a house on the green of Hampton Court, and there resided till his death.

We can easily conceive the worse than gloom in which the palace was enveloped during the reign of William, for dull state is a thousand times worse than desolation. Nor could the courtly scene have been much enlivened by the heavy, domestic virtues of Queen Anne, who was here confined, giving birth to her short-lived son, the Duke of Gloucester. It is one proof of the melancholy of William's reign, that there have been no court chroniclers, not only no Pepyses and Evelyns, but no lady-gossips and letter-writers; no Lady Mary Wortleys, nor Mrs. Montagues. All was dry theology or gloomy politics in the king's apartments, or grave disputations or heavy tapestry-work in those of the queen.

Their day passed away; and the walks of Hampton Court gardens were gladdened with other sights than King William leaning on his favourite Bentinck, or opening his heart, which had much of the hero in it, to Keppel. Pope was now seen, his small, deformed person resting on one of the seats, coquetting for hours with the court ladies; and here Lord Petre cut off the lock of Arabella Fermour's hair,—here, therefore, originated that exquisite poem, written in a fortnight, and published at first in "Lintot's Miscellany," the "Rape of the Lock."

Anne occasionally resided at the palace: after her reign it relapsed again into its character of a royal nursery. Hence the great number of juvenile and infantile portraits in the apartments, — the royal babies, from Henry VIII. downwards to the last fair infant daughter of George III. It is remarkable that at present no portrait is to be found there of our present queen.

A promise of vulgar gaiety was apparent in the time of George I., who caused the great hall to be converted into a theatre; and the stage was retained in the scene of Wolsey's triumphs until the year 1790. The last royal personage who dwelt in the apartments was one, the most popular of his family, Frederic, Prince of Wales. He left behind him, in numerous pictures, memorials of his residence at this palace. And in the park are still to be traced some lines of fortifications, drawn out for the military instruction of the incipient "butcher" of the year '45, William, Duke of Cumberland.

With the untimely death of Frederic ended all the dignity of Hampton Court. Wolsey's hall resounded no longer with the pipe and tabor sounding for the corantoe, nor with the dulcimer wailing out the notes to the pavone. Cobwebs were aloft in the noble roof. In process of time it seemed to be forgotten that there was a hall, or had ever been a hall; and the discovery of one was treated as a national surprise. It required, indeed, almost a fortune to see Hampton Court

in former days. The few rooms which were shown were thronged by a hot crew, who had each to pay some toll to a virago of a housemaiden at each several door. "Pay a shilling here, sir!" sounded like a knell in one's ears. I knew one gentleman—naval, probably, and Irish, of course, with a tinge of Scottish blood in his veins—who, incensed at last, refused to pay tribute. A violent altercation ensued, and he was not allowed to pass, but shut up for some hours, (until the lady housemaid thought better of it,) in a chamber, King William staring at him all the while, and Queen Mary, cold as ice, freezing him with her gaze. At length, after various obstacles, public and private, the palace was opened gratis in a royal way to an anxious, palace-loving public. I remember, when young, considering that to see Hampton Court was an event only to happen once in one's life; now fancy walking in any day, and going there too, if you liked, with no money in your pocket,—only, perhaps, if you chose to be liberal, giving a civil policeman a sixpence for an excellent little guide-book! It is like a vision; and Mr. Hume, the chief promoter, deserves anything but a monument (for I hate monuments) for it.

After the main part of the work was accomplished, it still remained to open and to clear Wolsey's hall. Now the hall is an excellent receptacle for old china, worm-eaten books, or title-papers, table-linen, family pictures—it would even accommodate guinea-pigs and silkworms. I will not venture to declare *what* was in

it, nor have we any right to inquire; but this I know, that it took many visits from Mr. Hume to *excavate*— for I fancy that might be an appropriate word—and to restore to order that interesting memento of former splendour.

It is opened, and now, even with all its grave defects, it is a regal sight. One only feature disfigured it till lately. The interior was, until about eighteen months ago, guarded by policemen, who played with great propriety the same *rôle* as the housemaidens of old. They were efficient, but certainly did not look very like the servants of a palace. The queen, on visiting Hampton Court, was shocked beyond measure at their blue-and-white, privy-council-like costume; and commanded that without delay they should wear the undress royal livery, and so they now do. It is vexatious to reflect, that by the injudicious though well-meant opening of the palace on Sundays, this body of fine, and, as it seems to me, well-conducted men are kept away from divine service by this arrangement.

I have omitted to remark that once, and once only, Hampton Court was appropriated as the retreat of a prince, driven by circumstances from his dominions. This was in 1795, when the Prince of Orange sought an asylum in England, and found it in this palace. And might not that appropriation serve as a hint for future times? To what purpose can the fabric, alternately the court and the prison, be better applied than as the suitable domicile of royal or illustrious personages, when in unmerited distress?

I returned by the Water Gallery, and soon discerned my waterman seated on the edge of his huge boat across the river. He answered to my call; and in a quarter of an hour I found myself walking along the lane which crosses the Portsmouth Road at right angles, leading to my cottage home.

CHAP. IV.

HOLLAND HOUSE, AND ITS INHABITANTS.

REFLECTIONS naturally arise in the mind, on visiting first one old place and then another, on the singular changes in the society of the great world which have taken place since the days when Ham House was a nest of political rogues, and Hampton Court a prison. The places which I describe are as familiar to us as turnpikes; they are connected, nevertheless, with some of the most stirring events of former days. They are mementos, which, without the law of primogeniture, would have long ago been lost to us entirely.

What traveller by a dusty omnibus has not seen Holland House, that venerable seat of the Copes, the Riches, and the Foxes? What school-girl is there in Phillimore Place, Kensington, that cannot prate of Addison and his brandy-and-water, his death-bed, the one profaning, the other sanctifying the seclusion of the place? What British heart is there that does not tremble at the surmise of its possible and oft-reported demolition, and shudder at the mention of new squares, of *Fox* Terraces, *Rich* Gardens, *Cope* Villas, and *Addison* Cottages? There is no calculating to what an extent the cupidity of man may not go. Whether this last and great relic of the seventeenth century may not

follow the fortunes of its sister edifice, Campden House, and be converted into a school, or may not produce more by its very annihilation than in its integrity; whether it may not become a railroad station, or end in flourishing as a collegiate establishment for young Calvinist ministers, or a nunnery for Protestant sisters.

In the days of the "Spectator," "dreams" were patronised by the public. If a man wished to convey admonition to the afflicted, he had only to dream; hence the exquisitely touching dream of Mirza, than which, a finer address to the disconsolate never fell from human preacher. If he chose to be censorious, he had only to "dream," and, behold, a budget of delightful satire was poured forth at his awaking. Now, if I were to choose my dream, I should at this moment, with candles flickering, and the wind howling around my cottage retreat, beg the Fates and Fairies to let me dream of Kensington. I should like even to dream of it when it bore its ancient name of *Kenesitune;* when the two thousand acres of land which composed its manor were divided into pasture or meadow-land, or, perhaps, not divided at all — a rude common, perchance, bounded by the hamlets of Brompton and Earls' Court, and the Gravel Pits, and reaching until it touched the King's Gore, a royal demésne, as we find, or as somebody finds, in a record dated 1270. I should like to dream of Kenesitune when William the Conqueror presented it, a kingly gift, to Geoffrey, Bishop of Constance, chief justiciary of England — when there were eighteen villans, and four ploughs

only on the demesne, meadow equal to two plough lands, pasture for the cattle of the town, pannage for two hundred hogs, and three acres of vineyards, — all together valued at 10*l.* I should not object to a vision of the old abbey of Kensington, the lands of which consisted of ten hides and a virgate of demesne lands (a hide consisting — no offence to the intelligent public for the hint — of 120 acres); a virgate being the fourth part of a mile. After the dissolution of the monasteries, these same abbey-lands were vested in the crown; and "a change comes over the spirit of my dream," and a mysterious cloud rests upon the lands and the monastic edifice, until after being leased out by Queen Elizabeth to different persons, they were conveyed to Sir Walter Cope, the father-in-law of Henry Rich, the first Earl of Holland.

My dream, if I had dared in these days of reason to dream, would have comprised the pastoral and varied region of Knotting Bernes, or Knutting Bernes, which I should have beheld covered with nut-trees; and awakened to have found it converted into the vulgarism of Notting Hill. The Veres, Earls of Oxford, had *that* manor; and also the Groves, west of Kensington — a pleasant sound of a name for those who live in No. 1. or No. 2. Grove Place, with a scrap of a garden in front — two laurustinuses choked by dust, or black with smoke, constituting *their* grove; or maybe, a bunch of daffodils in the spring, the chief pride of their garden. And as for the nutting, which was offered so pleasantly to the sojourner in *Kenesitune*,

there is no reminiscence of it save in the greengrocers' shops.

I must dream no more, but come to the stern realities of life; and few of these are more striking than those which involved Sir Henry Rich, who gave the name of Holland House to the manor of Abbots Kensington, of which we have spoken; and who caused the same, or part of the same house, to resemble in its outline the first half of the letter H.

Before the time of this accomplished yet unprincipled courtier, the central portion of Holland House was in existence. It was built, in 1604, by Sir Walter Cope. I should be much obliged if the architect had left his name on the outside, *not* in cipher, like him of Cologne, but in good old English capitals. His name was John Thorpe, and he had done his work when Isabel Cope, the daughter and heiress of Sir Walter Cope, who was created Baron of Kensington, gave her hand and the hopes of a large inheritance to Sir Henry Rich.

This young scion of quality was the second son of Robert Rich, Earl of Warwick, by Penelope, the ill-fated daughter of an ill-fated father, Robert Devereux, Earl of Essex. A mournful romance had this lady's life proved. Among the most gallant of Queen Elizabeth's courtiers, none merited so well her favour as the handsome Charles Blount, afterwards Baron Mountjoy, and Earl of Devonshire. He was that youth whom old Naunton tells us, "had a pretty sort of admission into the court;" and the same babbler relates that he had heard the tale from "a discreet man of his own,

and much more of the secrets of those times." Now, if he had talked in those words of a discreet *woman*, posterity might not have marvelled at the application of the words. Howbeit, the manner of young Blount's introduction was thus: — The queen was at Whitehall, at dinner, when he came to see the fashion of her court. "He was then," says Naunton, "much about twenty years of age, of a brown hair, a sweet face, a most neat composure, and tall in his person." The queen soon found him out, and with an affected frown asked the Lady Carver who he was? She answered, that she knew him not; and inquiries went from mouth to mouth, the queen, meantime, "with the eye of majesty fixed upon him (as she was wont to do, and to daunt men she knew not), stirred the blood of this young gentleman, insomuch that his colour came and went;" which the queen observing, she gave him her hand to kiss, saying, that she no sooner saw him than she was sure there was some noble blood in him, and ending, "fail you not to come to court, and I will bethink myself how to do you good." So one might suppose, as I dare say Sir Robert Naunton and his "discreet man" thought too, that the youth's fortune was made.

It was, however, his ill hap to become acquainted in the court with Penelope, the miserable daughter of the Earl of Essex, and the mother of Henry Rich. Young Blount had every possible quality that could enslave the heart, and rivet a hopeless affection. How beautiful is the following character of him in his dawn of

youth: —"He wanted not wit and courage, for he had very fine attractions, and being a good piece of a scholar; yet were they accompanied with the retractives of bashfulness and a natural modesty, which, as the love of his house and the ebb of his fortunes then stood, might have hindered his profession, had they not been reinforced by the profession of sovereign favour and the queen's gracious invitation." Thus gifted, and proving, in after life, an ornament to the characters of soldier, scholar, statesman, courtier, young Blount won the heart of Penelope Devereux.

Their mutual ill-starred affection was sealed by an interchange of marriage vows — a manifest pre-contract, which in those days was a legal bond; and which might —which *did*—palliate the guilt of the sad hereafter. Those vows were concealed, for Blount was poor. The fortunes of his house had long been decaying. His grandfather had sunk them in the effort to appear magnificent at the court of Henry VIII. His father had hastened their downfall by a life-long endeavour to discover the philosopher's stone — a snare to the speculative, which might rival railroads in our times. His elder brother was prodigal; for himself, he was destined to "the profession of the law, in which he hoped one day to rebuild the greatness of his house;" and that hope had grown with his growth, for being desired when a child to sit for his portrait, he desired to be painted with a trowel in his hand, and the inscription—"Ad reedificandam antiquam domum." Such was his ambition. His patrimony was at this time not more than

1000 marks per annum, wherewith he lived, says the same authority, "in a fine garb or way without any sustentation." And the more credit to him that he did so.

But this lowly estate did not accord with the high views of Lord Essex for his daughter. He discovered her attachment, and her fate was sealed for life—a fate of peculiar hardship. She was forced into a marriage with Robert, the wealthy Lord Rich; but her heart was still devoted to her first love, and a guilty intercourse ensued. At length she fled from her husband's house, taking with her five younger children, whom she affirmed to owe their birth to Blount. Of a very numerous family, the elder ones were acknowledged by Rich; among these was Sir Henry. To finish this sad story, Lady Rich was received in the house of her paramour with a "mournful cordiality," for Blount had then risen to high employments and to rank, and he dreaded the censures of the world. A divorce was obtained, and the guilty pair were married by Archbishop Laud, who was at that time a chaplain in the family of Blount. For this act Laud encountered the censures of the hard-hearted Puritans; but posterity will acquit the coupling of hands so early intended to be united, and the restitution to some sort of honour of a woman so truly unfortunate and miserable. Blount had by this time attained an eminent position in the country. In his youth he had fought against the Spanish Armada with great distinction; and his age had been signalised by similar displays of valour in

Ireland. On the accession of James I. he was appointed lieutenant of that kingdom; and he was also endowed with the Order of the Garter, and created Earl of Devonshire. Weak woman may better, and she *does* better, brave public censures than strong man. Blount had a character to keep up; his unhappy victim had none. The marriage enforced by honour covered him with shame, and prevented his forming any other tie which might perpetuate his name and title. The union was, however, solemnised at Wanstead, in Essex, in 1605; but Blount survived it only a few months. The world, as it is designated, was clamorous at his breach of decorum; and his sensitive and honourable mind sank under the remarks of a busy, unthinking, fashionable crew: or as his secretary, Fynes Morison, expressed it, "that grief of unsuccessful love brought him to his last end."

Such was the fate of Henry Rich's mother—a sad but not rare case in those days, when marriages were regarded *only* as alliances: if well-selected, the fate was sealed. As to the course of true love, it never was known to go smooth: hence pre-contracts, a sort of legal-illegal marriage, which often created much confusion and litigation, were common; and some of our best families ran a risk of being taxed with illegitimacy.

The family from whom Rich had sprung was not of the highest antiquity. In the reign of Henry VII. Richard Rich, an opulent mercer in London, had laid the foundation of the fortunes of his race. Under Henry VIII. the grandson of the mercer had become

Lord Chancellor of England. It is curious to observe how the characteristics of a race are transmitted from father to son. Lord Chancellor Rich, observing, in the latter part of King Henry's reign, the dangers of the times, did, says Dugdale, "like a discreet pilot, who, seeing a storm at hand, gets his ship into harbour, make suit to the king, by reason of some bodily infirmities, that he might be discharged of his office,"—a request which was granted. The illness was, nevertheless, feigned, being of a sort very prevalent in that reign, namely, the fear of death; for the wary chancellor had for once, to use a vulgar phrase, put his discretion in his pocket. He was a fast friend to the Duke of Somerset, who was then in the Tower—so was the Duke of Norfolk. Now Rich had the ill fortune to send a confidential epistle to Somerset, merely addressed to "The Duke." The servant thinking that the Duke of Norfolk must be, *par excellence, the* duke, delivered it to him; and it was in fear of discovery that Rich begged to be relieved of his office, and pleaded bodily infirmity.

Still more base was his conduct to Sir Thomas More, against whom, this worthy ancestor of Sir Henry Rich gave witness—his testimony relating to a pretended conversation in the Tower; the relation of which was a base treachery, the fabrication of which was a crime. Strong and passionate was the answer given by More, and enough to blast the whole of Rich's existence with remorse.

"If I were a man," exclaimed the sorrow-stricken

martyr, "that had no regard to my oath, I had no occasion to be here a criminal; and if this oath, Mr. Rich, you have taken be true, then I hope I may never see God's face: which, were it otherwise, is an imprecation I would not be guilty of to save the world." More then reproached Rich with a character of ill-report, with being a gamester, and ill-thought-of in his parish, and an unlikely man, therefore, to be the depositary of his secrets.

The chancellor having, by the daughter of a grocer, left issue, the name of Rich was upraised to a barony, and barons they continued until, by James I., Robert Rich was created Earl of Warwick. This title he transmitted to his eldest son, Henry Rich being, at the time of his father's decease, only a younger son upon his preferment—a young "man about town," ready for anything, either to woo an heiress, or to negotiate a royal marriage, or to betray a friend, or to persecute to the death an enemy.

His elder brother, the Earl of Warwick, was worthy of the great ancestor, the lord chancellor. He seems to have been a merry edition of his brother, the future owner of Holland House. What words can paint him more to the life than those of Clarendon?

"He was a man of a pleasant and companionable wit and conversation; of an universal jollity, and such a license in his words and in his actions, that a man of less virtue could not be found out. But with all these faults he had great authority and credit with the people; for by opening his doors, and spending a great part of his estate, of which he was very prodigal, upon them; and by being present with them at his devotions, and making himself

merry with them, and at them, which they dispensed with, he became the head of that party (Cromwell's), and got the style of 'a goodly man.' In other words, he cajoled even the stiff Puritans."

His brother, Sir Henry Rich, was by no means so popular a man, nor so fortunate a navigator amid the shoals of party. Nature had, indeed, marked him out for one of her favourites; and although the portraits of him extant do not give the impression of any superabundance of personal charms, we are told even by the grave Clarendon that he had "a lovely and winning presence, to which he added the charm of a 'genteel conversation.'" He quickly rose in the courtly favour, upon which, throwing aside the profession of arms at an early age, he determined to depend. He began that gay but unprofitable career, as a captain of the King's Guard, and took his rank as a Knight of the Bath. In 1622 he was elevated to the dignity of Baron Kensington. His chief patron was Henry, Prince of Wales, the eldest son of James I., who had been installed a knight at the same time as Rich. The death of that prince transferred the graceful youth to the service of Charles; and his elegance of person, and his convenience of principle, quickly attracted the regards of the first Duke of Buckingham: yet that nobleman did not, and could not know the man to whom he entrusted the most delicate missions. Rich, beneath his smiles and his "genteel conversation," concealed an irritable, proud temper: his was a *company* temper. In private life he was violent and haughty; nay more, he was a man of the utmost selfishness, unmitigated by any of

those loftier qualities which sometimes, coupled with a fiery, overbearing disposition, make one almost repel the mixture of good—which will recal our regard when least we wish to give it, and which will not permit us *quite* to hate. From his dawn of youth, true to his ancestral characteristics, Henry Rich was a selfish politician. At first, when the sun shone upon the Stuarts, he was a Royalist; and he saw Charles I. in his most interesting character—that of a lover. Accompanying the Duke of Buckingham when he went with the princely youth to woo the Infanta, he beheld, in all her girlish and early fading charms, Henrietta Maria, on their way through France. Returning, their mission unsuccessful, Rich was deputed to woo the fair French girl by proxy. He went and plied the suit of one of the most devoted of admirers, and faithful and loving of husbands, who ever sat on the throne of England, or on any throne. But Henrietta saw in the handsome Rich the being whom she could *love;* and her heart was deeply touched by his attractions. Long after her marriage a gentle partiality continued to exist towards the dangerous proxy, and ceased only when his treachery became too apparent.

After the death of Buckingham, Rich, now Earl of Holland, attached himself to the queen's party, and received many indications of her favour. His fortune was ample, and had he been possessed of the slightest grain of principle, he might have led an honourable, if not a happy career. But he was one of those whom no

obligations could bind; and he may be termed, no less than Goring, a "pillar of ingratitude."

Upon the first outbreak of the great rebellion, he was entrusted with the forces that were to march against Scotland. He betrayed his trust; yet was it long before the confiding Charles would believe in his treachery. At length, the meeting which took place between the disaffected members of parliament and General Fairfax, at Holland House, settled the question of Rich's disloyalty.

According to some historians, remorse followed this line of conduct; according to others, disgust with his new associates drove the inconstant earl back to his early friends. When the king's affairs became desperate, he suddenly determined to rejoin his master's standard. He repaired to Oxford. Merton College beheld him cringing to Henrietta Maria, whom he had propitiated through Jermyn; the hall of Christchurch received him at the king's levees. He entered there with the ease of one who had never betrayed the cause; was disgusted by the reserve he encountered; stole out one dark night, and returned to the parliamentarian quarters. His reception there was not cordial, and he suffered a short imprisonment. He then published his "Declaration to the Kingdom,"—a bad apology for bad conduct, ending with these words,—"And this ground *I* profess faithfully to stand or fall upon; that I shall choose rather to perish with the Parliament, in their intentions to maintain our religion, laws, and liberties, than to *prosper* in the abandoning of the *least*

of them. And this I bind up by the vows of a Christian and a *gentleman*." This was in 1643. In the spring of 1648 he turned round again to the Royalists; appeared in arms for that cause at Kingston-on-Thames, was overpowered and pursued to St. Neots, where he was made prisoner. He was, at first, kept safe and quiet, for the only time in his turbulent life, at his brother's castle at Warwick, and afterwards in the Tower. On the 9th of March, 1649, he suffered on the scaffold, having been declared guilty of treason by the self-constituted "High Court of Justice" in Westminster. He lost his life by a single vote, the Speaker giving his against him; and he was brought to the block in company with the honourable, lamented Lord Capel.

On the scaffold, a little of the earl's ancient foppery clung to him; and he appeared, having pulled off his gown and doublet, in a white satin waistcoat, and prepared himself for the fatal stroke by putting on a white satin cap, edged with silver lace, — a sort of bridal finery. Yet even *he* died well—every one did in those days of horror: it was as necessary a part of education as to live well. Having professed himself a Protestant, he prayed awhile, gave the fatal signal, and all was over. His health was about this time so bad, that Nature would soon have released the world of him without the aid of the executioner. After his execution, Holland House again became the quarters of General Fairfax and his soldiery; and in what state those un-

pleasant tenants found the structure and its premises, it is now necessary to relate.

The material of Holland House is brick—good old-fashioned brick, with embellishments of stone and stucco. In the central compartment of the principal of the structure is a turret of three stories, having a porch in the lower part. This was the original house, erected by Sir Walter Cope in 1607. The Earl of Holland had enlarged it by the addition of two wings and two arcades, designed it is said by Inigo Jones. Ten arches, fifteen feet inside, extend from the porch to the front of the two wings, their roofs forming the terraces to the first story. The balustrades which surround them represent the fleur-de-lis, part of the arms of the Rich family. Before the house is a court, or area, and at each extremity of this a stone pier, also designed by Jones, and executed by Nicholas Stone. The niches of these piers are surmounted with the arms of Rich, quartering Bouldry and Cope. These fret-work arches were constructed of Norman stone, soft and quickly to be worked, but not durable. But in the first Earl of Holland's time, it stood in all its perfection and delicacy. To the front of the house, facing the Great Western Road, stretched, even in those days, a lawn, on which Cromwell and Ireton are said to have canvassed their bold and bloody projects.

The gardens and pleasure-grounds which now form so interesting a feature of Holland House were not laid out until 1769; but Rich planted, or is thought to have planted, certain ancestral elms and sycamores,

which cover the brow of an eminence behind Holland House; and remains of avenues and lines may be detected. Hence a view of Harrow-on-the-Hill and a peep into the country excited the admiration of a poet of a later period; and Tickell, in his verses on the death of Addison, has these lines on Holland House:—

"How sweet were once thy prospects fresh and fair,
Thy sloping walks and unpolluted air!
How sweet the gloom beneath thy aged trees,
Thy noontide shadow, and thy evening breeze!"

In these retreats wandered the beautiful Lady Diana Rich, of whom Aubrey relates, that walking one morning in her father's garden at Kensington, about eleven o'clock, before dinner, to take the air, being then in very good health, she met her own apparition, "habit and every thing, as in a looking-glass." In a month afterwards, she sickened and died of the small-pox. It was a family spectre; for the sister of the young beauty, Lady Isabella Thynne, had a similar visitation; and another sister, the Countess of Breadalbane, was also warned of her approaching death by the unwelcome aspect of her own fair form standing before her.

Such was the exterior of the house when General Fairfax desecrated it. He even intended at first to reside there; but eventually the widowed Countess of Holland was again permitted to take up her abode in her home. And she seems to have enjoyed herself there

tolerably well, notwithstanding her lord's death. When the theatres were shut up by the Puritans, the poor players, among other places, resorted to the retirement of Holland House; and Alexander Goffe, who played female characters, arranged their rendezvous for them. A sum was made up for these, at that time, oppressed wanderers, by the handful of gentry and nobility who encouraged their languishing efforts.

Robert, second Earl of Holland, made Holland House his principal residence. On the death of his elder brother he succeeded to the earldom of Warwick; and his daughter-in-law—a Miss Middleton, of Chirk Castle—was the Countess of Warwick who married Addison. Her husband died in 1701, when she devoted her whole attention to the education of her young son, the Earl of Warwick. That Addison was tutor to this dissipated youth is contradicted by modern testimonies; that he was a sort of useful friend, adviser, would-be father-in-law, seems likely from one of his own letters, saying that he had been searching all the neighbourhood over for birds'-nests, to instruct his young lordship in natural history. "This morning I have news brought me of a nest that has abundance of little eggs, streaked with red and blue veins, that, by the description they give me, must make a very beautiful *figure on a string.* My neighbours are very much divided in their opinions upon them. Some say they are skylarks, others will have them to be a canary bird; but I am much mistaken in the turn and colour of them, if they are not full of tom-tits." This epistle was written when Addison was

Under-Secretary of State: certainly the Countess of Warwick must have had a capital jointure.

In 1716, Addison made that rash experiment which has failed to so many,—he became the despised, obliged, trampled-upon husband of a woman of rank. Holland House owned him as its master, but he was a slave; no bondage ever was more galling, for it was misery coupled with duty. The accomplished moralist, satirist, poet, dramatist, theologian, was buffeted and browbeaten by an ignorant, arrogant woman. His spirits sank under the domestic tyranny, which has often quelled the finest genius. He was raised two years after his marriage to the zenith of his prosperity, by being appointed principal secretary of state; but his health rapidly declined. He consoled himself by writing a religious work, and drinking brandy. There were moments when reviving cheerfulness and strength regained gave him new hopes; but he was the husband of a virago. He took refuge in the tavern entitled the "Don Saltero," in Cheyne Walk, Chelsea; and there wrote, drank, and dreamed, perhaps of happier days. But the axe was laid to the root of the tree: dropsy succeeded asthma. He died at Holland House, at the early age of fifty-four, leaving an only daughter by the Countess of Warwick.

Dr. Young has thus related, in language not unworthy of the author of the "Night Thoughts," the particulars of Addison's death-bed:—

"After a long and manly but vain struggle with his distemper, he dismissed his physicians, and with them all hopes of life; but

with his hopes of life he dismissed not his concern for the living, but sent for a youth, nearly related and finely accomplished, yet not above being the better for good impressions from a dying friend. He came; but life was now glimmering in the socket; the dying friend was silent. 'Dear sir, you sent for me! I believe, I hope that you must have some commands. I shall hold them most sacred.' Forcibly grasping the youth's hand, he sadly said, 'See in what peace a Christian can die!' He spoke with difficulty, and soon expired."

Lord Byron has remarked on this, "Unluckily he died of brandy;" and it appears but too true that Addison's fine mind was ofttimes nearly clouded by the effects of ardent spirits. After his marriage he ceased altogether to be a domestic man. He breakfasted with Budgell, or Phillips, or Davenant. He dined at Button's, in Russell Street; he often sat late, and drank much wine, at a house now called the "White Horse Inn," situated at the bottom of Holland House Lane, and said by tradition to have been one of his haunts. Perhaps the haughty countess might have *something* to complain of. How strangely are manners, and, indeed, are men altered since that time! What now should we say, were we to hear of right honourables sitting in a tavern till they could hardly see their way home at night?

After the death of Addison's noble son-in-law, the last Earl of Warwick of the family of Rich, Holland House was long deserted; and decay had made its usual havoc in her turrets and saloons, and her gardens were overgrown in wild confusion, when a new dynasty betook themselves to its deserted halls. This was the

family of Fox, of no ancient or noble date, derived from Foxley in the county of Wilts, whom one may conjecture, without any great stretch of fancy, to have been sporting characters. Stephen, the founder of this celebrated family, was a faithful adherent of Charles II., and a senator of three reigns. To many minds he will appear still more eminent as being the projector of Chelsea Hospital. He was the ancestor both of the Ilchester and Holland families; and upon him was bestowed, in augmentation of his coat armour, by a curious coincidence, one of the bearings of the Riches — in a canton, a fleur-de-lis: so he seemed fit and fated for Holland House.

His son was Paymaster of the Forces to Charles II.; his grandson was Henry Fox, the first Lord Holland, and the father of Charles James Fox, and the parliamentary rival of the great Lord Chatham. Both Lord Holland and Lord Chatham had been educated at Eton, both had entered on their public career about the same time, both were scholars and orators; yet their characters were widely opposed. Lord Chatham's unsullied youth knew no license; the career of Fox had early entailed embarrassments which drove him from England. On his return he attached himself to Sir Robert Walpole, and eloped with the Lady Caroline Lennox, sister to the Duke of Richmond. At once the rake and the statesman, formed for society, of an admirable temper, and of infirm principles, no man acquired more political adherents than Henry Fox, few men attracted less respect. It was the charm of manner that attached

his friends, not that dependence on his worth which ensures a permanent support. Even Lord Chesterfield has declared that Henry Fox "had no fixed principles of religion or morality," and was too "unwary in ridiculing and exposing them." Yet he fulfilled the duties of life well, and "his charities," observes Chesterfield, "demonstrated that he possessed in no small degree the milk of human kindness."

It must, however, have been a liquid somewhat diluted by avarice and venality. Chatham had no regard for money; by Fox it was worshipped: and though his doting fondness for his son, Charles James, has been instanced as an excuse for his grasping at power and wealth, yet to the right-minded no such excuse will be thought valid. Lord Holland was a poet; and some verses of his, published in the "Annual Register," are considered by Sir Egerton Brydges to show more poetic talent than his son ever displayed. As a debater, his lordship is declared by Chesterfield to have been singularly inelegant and even disagreeable; his force lay in tact, which enabled him, partly by long experience, partly by the natural shrewdness of a powerful intellect, to discern when to press a question and when to yield.

Late in life Lord Holland retired to a house which he built at Kingsgate, in Kent, — intending this residence, according to Dallaway, as a correct imitation of Cicero's Formian Villa at Baiæ. Gray's lines on visiting Kingsgate, then in ruins, in 1766, are bitter. They show, however, the general impression which

Fox's memory had left. These are the first two stanzas: —

"Old, and abandoned by each venal friend,
Here H——d formed the pious resolution
To smuggle a few years, and strive to mend
A broken character and constitution.

"On this congenial spot he fix'd his choice,
Earl Goodwin trembled for his neighbouring sand;
Here sea-gulls scream and cormorants rejoice,
And mariners, though shipwreck'd, dread to land."

The last steps of Lord Holland's life were marked by a harshness which made him, according to a modern writer, more odious to the nation than any minister since the days of Strafford. He was, indeed, a worthy disciple of the school of Walpole; and the nation came in time to regard him as a man who was ready and adapted for any measures that suited his ambition — for the dirty work attendant upon the management of secret-service money, or for keeping the people down by the bayonet. Gray makes him speak in his attributed character of remorseless cruelty, when he describes his lamentations that confederates had not enabled him to carry out his sanguinary and destructive notions, in the coarse stanza beginning thus: —

"Purged by the sword and purified by fire,
Then had we seen proud London's hated walls."

Such was the father of Charles James Fox, who appears, it must be owned, to have inherited the best qualities of his parent. A long minority succeeded the

death of Stephen, the second baron of his name, and the father of the late lamented Lord Holland. During this interval, the house in which Fairfax had vexed the air with long preachings and prayings, and in which Addison had written and suffered, was let to Lord Roseberry and to Mr. Bearcroft, until, on returning from his travels in 1796, the late Lord Holland had it fitted up for his residence at a great expense. And it now becomes us to treat of the inside of the house, which has sustained, since the days of its first occupant, very extensive alterations.

It seems rather an Irish way of describing the inside of a house by referring at first to the outside; but whilst we are on the subject of alterations it may be as well to notice, that by Henry, the first Baron Holland, the lodge, that modern addition, and the approach to the house, were constructed; and that irregular avenue of elms, bounding a lawn of eighteen acres, appears to have been planted in his time. Passing through a decorated stone porch, you enter the porter's hall, partially wainscoted, and adorned with three Italian pictures in fresco; in the middle stands the model of that truly colossal statue of Charles James Fox, which is now coated over with smoke in Bloomsbury Square. This was a present from the distinguished, and now venerable sculptor, Sir Richard Westmacott, to the late Lord Holland, and it was placed, in 1815, on the spot where it now stands during the absence of his lordship in Italy — a superb tribute to past greatness and living virtue, and, I should think, almost a single instance of a

similar liberality. This entrance hall is nearly in the same state as in the time of Henry Rich, the first earl: it is plain, but characteristic of the period in which it was completed.

Facing the entrance is the Journal Room, so called on account of its containing a complete set of the journals of the Lords and Commons. Minerals, stuffed birds, insects, and Chinese figures, relieve the dryness of the aspect of large bookcases, and take off the thoughts from stormy debates or prolix preambles. There are several portraits, one of the handsome Charles, third Duke of Richmond, a Reynolds of his brother, and a Lely of Mr. Charles Fox, the son of old Sir Stephen, and an accomplished debater in grave King William's time. Then there is a likeness of Monk Lewis, who had the courage to be painted as Hamlet, though one of the plainest men of his day. To the west of the Journal Room is the sitting-room of the first Baron Holland, communicating with the garden or dining-room, for the accommodation of the noble invalid, who lost the use of his limbs, by stairs an inch only in height, which would be covered over with a platform, so as to form an inclined plane—an excellent, a humane idea, and in those days of gout one very requisite.

Let us ascend the great staircase, opening, as we go, a large antique door, curiously embossed, and come (for I long to do so) at once to the gay haunts of the Wyndhams and Lennoxes — the scenes where royal dukes, ladies, and politicians, literati, artists, and Italian

refugees, mingled, and were happy to mingle — where Byron gazed on the bloated features of Sheridan, with that almost reverential curiosity with which genius looks on genius — where Mackintosh was in his happiest moods, for he loved the host and hostess of his time, and where he alternately exchanged gay *persiflage* with the lady of the old structure, or talked historically with Allen. Nay, more, in these now fading and deserted chambers was reared the boy Charles James, the man whose nature was so lofty, whose passions so debasing — the ardent friend, the unscrupulous votary: here was that intellect suffered to dawn — here polished by the best society — here permitted to attain that empire over principle which brought the lofty spirit so often down to faction.

The Gilt Chamber, *par excellence*, claims the first attention. It is a most interesting specimen of the domestic style of the first King James's time. Three bow-windows, formed in the recesses of the Gothic turret, lighted and enlarged a room by no means spacious. The ceiling was formerly painted, but during the long minority of the late Lord Holland it fell, and was replaced by one now merely whitewashed. A wainscot in compartments displays still, on a blue field, the gold fleur-de-lis of the Rich family, inclosed within branches of palm-leaves, and gold crosslets on a red field, encircled with twisted branches of laurels, surmounted with an earl's coronet. And why the coronet should not now be there by right I cannot conceive: many *ignobler* families have it to their boast. All around, on

medallions, are the arms of the Riches and the Copes, as if that aspiring and worldly man, the earl of Charles's time, had trembled lest his name and honours should, by any fatal chance, have become extinct, and wished to preserve them, at least, *there.* Nay, more, as you advance to the drawing-room, this motto stares you in the face, — "Ditior est qui se;" a punning motto, referring to the name of Rich. Sundry female figures, denoting Power, Justice, Peace — three awkward subjects, one would suppose, to Henry Rich — are painted about and above the chimney-piece, in the frieze of which are two painted bas-reliefs, taken from the Aldobrandini marriage. These performances are declared by Horace Walpole to have been done in the style, and not unworthy of Parmegiano. A column of Elba granite, marble busts of the Prince Regent and of Henry IV. of France, of the Duke of Sussex and the Duke of Cumberland, of Lord Holland by Nollekens, look strangely in this ancient chamber, constructed when the British world had little notion that German blood would ever run in the royal veins of her princes, and when the proud Riches would have started with horror at the thought that the more modern name of Fox should supersede *their* antiquity. The bust of Lord Holland was accounted by Bartolozzi to be one of the finest specimens of sculpture since the days of Praxiteles; its being in Holland House must have been highly in favour of that opinion. Family portraits, mingled with those of Napoleon, of Gaspar de Yovellanos, a Spanish politician, and of Ludovico Ariosto,

copied from his tomb at Ferrara, complete the motley collection.

A beautiful apartment, called the Breakfast Room, joins the Gilt Room. This is unaltered since the days of James. A damask of white satin, figured with flowers, covers the walls — the wainscot is of green and gold. The very girandoles above the mantel-piece are old, and two curious cabinets, one of tortoiseshell, the other of ebony, accord well with this antiquity.

Sir Stephen Fox figures here, the founder of the noble houses of Ilchester and Holland. His integrity and loyalty were the bases of his fortunes. Sundry members of the same race appear in the Breakfast Room; but the last portrait ever painted by Sir Joshua of Charles James is the most interesting of the domestic series.

The great drawing-room is situated to the north of the Gilt Room, and is a noble apartment, fitted up with curtains of rich French silk, and decorated with superb cabinets and other costly articles of *virtù*. Here is Hogarth's famous picture, "The Indian Emperor," performed for the amusement of the "Butcher," William duke of Cumberland, by some children of high birth, at Mr. Conduit's, the Master of the Mint. Here figures, in her babyhood, the beautiful Lady Sophia Fermour, also Lady Deloraine, Miss Conduit, afterwards Lady Lymington, but far more illustrious as the niece of Sir Isaac Newton, whose bust is depicted in the scene. A good collection of pictures by the best masters adorns this splendid room. How English it is,

nevertheless, to dwell upon two portraits dear to our hearts — Garrick and Sterne! Garrick as Benedict, a character created for him, as it were, by anticipation; Lawrence Sterne, in his own unspeakable peculiarity of countenance, his eye flashing on the presumptuous gazer, his mouth partly opened, as if to utter some notable witticism — the masterpiece of Reynolds, who must have exulted in such a subject. This portrait (since sold and removed to Bowood) was, if I mistake not, copied in little for Eliza, on her voyage, for her cabin. Eliza, it is well known, eloped from the husband, to whom she returned, in India, with a gentleman somewhat younger than either Sterne or Mr. Draper. Sterne's picture fell into her husband's hands; he could not endure the sight of it, but gave it away, and it is now in England.

A smaller drawing-room contains also pictures and marbles; amongst other portraits, that of Francis Horner. Who can read the letters of the late Lady Holland, addressed to this good, if not great man, when he was threatened with consumption, without singular emotion? "Come to Holland House, and you shall have three rooms for your own use, unmolested, of a temperature regulated by Allen." I quote from memory, but it is the memory of the heart. He went not, but journeyed, seeking health, to the Italian shores, to die, hoping, believing, in the probability of a cure to the last.

Perhaps the most curious portions of an old house are the bed-rooms — certainly none show more plainly

the characteristics of past ages. A spacious and gloomy apartment at the western extremity of the central division of the house, received, according to tradition, Addison's last sigh, and an inner room served him as a retreat in his hours of literary labour. In another chamber, enriched with carvings and hangings, which are now daily surpassed by modern luxuries, is an association of a very different sort. There, limned by Sir Joshua, appears the exquisite face and form of Lady Sarah Lennox, the niece of the first Lady Holland, and the beauty who had the rare merit of inspiring George III. with romance. She appears not alone, but in a group, with Lady Sarah Strangways, the daughter of the first Lord Ilchester, and with Charles James Fox, at the age of fourteen. The boy stands with a copy of verses in his hand, which he is supposed to be addressing to his fair cousin, who is leaning out of a window of Holland House to listen to them. The subsequent fate of Lady Sarah, and the calamities of her chequered life, are well known.

When Henry Fox first purchased Holland House, the library, a room more replete with associations of interest than, perhaps, any similar room in England, was in so dilapidated a condition that it was even unfloored. The boards whereon resounded the footfalls of Addison, exist, therefore, no longer; but the Long Gallery, as it was in his time, now the library, is, with some alterations, the same. In the days of the "Spectator," it was, indeed, almost like a green-house, so full of windows, after the fashion of the Gallery at Hardwick,

being intended for dancing or exercises, and not for study. But these windows were blocked up by Lord Holland, and concentrated into two great bow-windows. It has been said, nevertheless, that Holland House has a window for every day in the year.

In this gallery or library, however, Addison spent much of that leisure which the arbitrary rule of his countess-wife permitted. At each end, so says tradition, was placed a table, whereon stood a bottle of wine. When in a composing mood, the accomplished author was in the habit of walking to and fro, and replenishing his exhausted frame, and rekindling his wit, by taking a glass at each extremity. It is to be hoped they were *pint* decanters.

The library of Holland House is celebrated all over Europe. Long under the direction of the late Mr. John Allen, formerly a medical man, it has accumulated to a great extent, driving from the walls of the Long Gallery, in particular, their former tenants, the family portraits, and filling, not only the Long Gallery, but two adjoining rooms. The collection began in 1796, and amounted, some years since, to 15,000 volumes. The rarity of the books is not, happily, their chief value, but their completeness as forming a library on individual subjects, especially on French and English memoirs, and of Spanish and Italian authors. It is a trait of real judgment, among so many splendours, that a small copy of Homer, once belonging to Sir Isaac Newton, and containing a distich in his writing on the

blank leaf, was more highly prized by Charles James Fox, to whom it belonged, than many of his treasures.

Such are the western and northern divisions of Holland House; the east comprises the dressing-room of the late Lady Holland, and an ante-room full of valuable portraits and cabinets, with fourteen japanned cases, containing a large and valuable collection of miniatures. Thence you may walk into a spacious sitting-room, the walls of which are of a bright rose colour. Of the various articles collected here, perhaps not the least interesting are the engravings from Byron's works, presented by the poet himself to Lady Holland. A tribute to Holland House and its host is recorded on the window of the dressing-room by John Hookham Frere. With a diamond he inscribed these words: —

> "May neither fire destroy, nor waste impair,
> Nor time consume thee, till the twentieth heir;
> May taste respect thee, and may fashion spare."

One great advantage crowns the attractions of this old mansion — its site, on a level, it is said, with the Stone Gallery of the dome of St. Paul's Cathedral. From the grounds a view over our southern Pentlands, the Surrey Hills, may be enjoyed. Modern skill has improved the diversified situation. In 1769, Mr. Charles Hamilton, of Paine's Hill, a friend of Lord Holland's, laid out and planted the grounds. The curious oaks, scattered about them, were of his planting, as well as the cedars. And a still higher proof of his taste is a long green walk, formerly an open lane,

which is now turfed and planted, and extends towards the Uxbridge Road. This beautiful glade was the favourite haunt of Mr. Fox, and was the last landscape he was destined to look upon and to enjoy. Two oriental planes, of great magnitude, guard its entrance. The gardens near the house are laid out in parterres, one of which represents a rosary of a circular form. Anon you come upon a fountain, then a column of granite, with a bust of Napoleon by Canova on the summit, with an inscription from Homer, which may be Englished thus: —

"He is not dead, he breathes the air
In lands beyond the deep,
Some distant sea-girt island, where
Harsh men the hero keep."

At the end of this beautiful flower-garden stands an alcove, on an elevated terrace; and here we read two lines in honour of Samuel Rogers: —

"Here Rogers sat, and here for ever dwell
To me those pleasures that he sings so well."

This effort came from the late Lord Holland, to which Luttrell has added some verses, about equal to those which are generally inserted in alcoves, or scrawled in albums.

The homely characteristics of an orchard precede the approach to the French garden. In this, enclosed as it is with a hedge of hornbeam and box, is the nursery of the first dahlia plants. This flower, already partially neglected by floriculturists, but long at the

zenith of public estimation, is of Spanish origin. The Americans had it, and it had been introduced to England, but not cultivated with success. In 1803 Lord Holland, when travelling in Spain, procured some seeds; and the plant, in time, bloomed, and was christened dahlia, from Andrew Dahl, a Swedish botanist.

The fish-ponds and the meadows of Holland House alone remain to be described. The former, which are seated about a quarter of a mile towards Hammersmith, appear to have been ancient; in the latter, to the west, a tragedy was enacted,—the duel between Lord Camelford and Mr. Best. The originator of this iniquitous and bloody scene was a false, fair woman, who prompted the mischief, and fed the fuel of that fire which was quenched only in death. It is a curious fact that the horse which Best rode to the spot of rendezvous had been won by that gentleman in a trial of skill in pistol-shooting from Lord Camelford. By a too sure aim fell the inconsistent but noble Camelford, scarcely thirty years of age. His youth was sullied by the license of fashionable life; yet he is said, strange to declare, to have been a firm believer in divine truths. When the ball entered his side, he exclaimed, "Best, I am a dead man! You have killed me, but I freely forgive you!" Again and again he declared himself to have been the aggressor. The wound was declared to be mortal; and the gallant sufferer languished in agonies of pain until the evening of the following day, when he was summoned to his dread account! How long must the

image of the wounded man, weltering in his blood, have haunted those who traversed that green, calm spot, in aftertimes! How must the pale and sorrow-stricken form of him who slew, whose unerring aim was *death*, have recurred to remembrance!

In all these scenes a spoiled, forward, gifted boy, took his earliest and latest delight. It was here that the father displayed his paternal tenderness in the following way. The boy, Charles James Fox, having been disappointed in not seeing a wall, which was blown up, demolished, Lord Holland had another wall built up, to be blown up again, in order that the precept, never to break a promise to a child, or, as Robert Hall would call it, "never to act a lie to a child," might be fulfilled to a letter. It was here that the future orator was encouraged to speak out his youthful and crude opinions with an indulgence from his father that did *not*, happily, end in making him the prig he was well entitled to be. It was *not* here, but at Spa, that his love of the gaming-table was first excited by a nightly allowance of five guineas to spend in that demoniacal amusement. It was here that in the exciting days of a Westminster election, the fair Duchess of Devonshire came to cheer and to assist. It was here, before the memorable alienations, Burke communed with a friend who besought him, when the hour of conflict came, and the senate rang with their burning eloquence, "to believe that there existed between them the ties of nature as near and dear as the relative situation of father and son;" but that appeal was

lost in the storm of debate and the violence of faction. In Fox's generous mind, their friendship could not be extinguished by the heat and intemperance of a day: in Burke it was already extinct, and for ever. It was here that Fox came when his health was shattered, and disease was hourly encroaching upon his frame, when the following touching account is given by Trotter of his emotions in revisiting the gardens of olland House: —

"He looked around him the last d.y l. .as there with a farewell tenderness that struck me very muc'. It was the place where he had spent his youthful days; every lawn. every garden, tree, and walk, were viewed by him with peculiar affection. He pointed out the beauties to me, and, in partic ar. showed me a green avenue, which his mother, the late Lady Holland, had made by shutting up a road. He was a very exquisi e judge of the picturesque, and had mentioned to me how beautiful this road had become since converted into an alley. He raised his eyes to the house, looked around, and was earnest in pointing out every thing he liked and remembered."

How similar to the recognition, dim and partial as it was, of Sir Walter Scott in entering his own hall at Abbotsford! How much had both to regret in the departure of their *you'h!* How many turbulent scenes both had shared since boyhood! Well might Fox say, —

"Life has passed
With me but roughly since I saw ye last!"

He died at Chiswick, and Holland House had not the mournful honour of receiving his last sigh.

It has been said, alluding to the private character of Charles James Fox, that "in the comparatively correct age in which our lot is cast, it would be almost as unjust to apply our more severe standard to him and his associates, as it would have been for the Ludlows and Hutchinsons of the seventeenth century to denounce the immoralities of Julius Cæsar. Nor let it be forgotten, that the noble heart and sweet disposition of this great man passed unscathed through an ordeal which, in almost every other instance, is found to deaden all the kindly and generous affections. A life of gaming, intrigue, and faction, left the nature of Charles James Fox as little tainted with selfishness or falsehood, and his heart as little hardened, as if he had lived and died in a farm-house; or, rather, as if he had not outlived his childish years."

To the house of Fox belongs the distinction that, during the course of an entire century, there has been always a member of it in some eminent and conspicuous situation in the country. Scarcely had the first Lord Holland closed his career than his son, Charles James, became the leader of the opposition; and before the death of that celebrated statesman, his nephew, the late Lord Holland, had gained a high place among the politicians of the day.

Certain hereditary qualities of mind and body characterised these three generations. In shrewdness and profundity, they resembled each other. In the absence of all personal elegance, in those physical defects which impeded their oratorical powers, they were also alike.

In person, they bore a still closer resemblance. The heavy eyebrow, the broad, thoughtful, majestic forehead, the full cheek, were transmitted from the first founder of the family, old Sir Stephen, to the last noble owner of Holland House; softened, it is true, for the features and expression of the stern royalist were harshly unpleasant. "In his descendants," writes one who was a competent judge, "the aspect was preserved; but it was softened till it became, in the late lord, the most gracious and interesting countenance that ever was lighted up by the mingled lustre of intelligence and benevolence."

As a public character the late Lord Holland was greatly inferior, not only to his uncle, but to his grandfather, whose strength as a debater had been formed under the banners of Walpole, in days when the House of Commons sometimes sat seventeen hours without intermission. He had the disadvantage of beginning his parliamentary career in the House of Lords. His hereditary hesitation had become, therefore, strengthened by the absence of opportunity to correct it. Like his great ancestors, his excellence lay in reply. His earlier political lessons were imbibed by the bedside of his dying uncle at Chiswick, when, being himself a boy of sixteen, Lord Holland beheld the pride of his house fade away and expire.

In private life Lord Holland had not a trace of his grandfather:—the best praise that could be given to him. He escaped also the errors of his uncle. He seemed to have culled from both their fairest graces of

character, their strong domestic affections, their wit, the sweetness of temper and *lovingness* of heart which marked Charles James; all set off and encircled by that courtly politeness which appeared superior to forms, and sprang from the gentlest feelings of the heart.

Those chambers in which the voices of the Copes, the Riches, and the Foxes resounded, are now desolate, and who can tell whether they will ever again be peopled with the great ones of the earth? "The time is coming," writes a mournful prophet, "when, perhaps, a few old men, the last survivors of our generation, will in vain seek, amidst new streets, and squares, and railway-stations, for the site of that building which was, in their youth, the favourite resort of wits and beauties, of painters and poets, of philosophers and statesmen."

Before Holland House *is* obliterated, let us recall, in one brief review, those characters which, passing before us like the shadows figured before Macbeth, must have figured there in the several dynasties who presided in those venerable chambers. Let us hasten over the brief rule of the Copes; precise enough and respectable, no doubt; gentlemen with bombasted inexpressibles and high-topped hats fresh from the City; and ladies in their stiff ruffs, almost lock-jawed, fresh from the quarter where mercers and man-milliners claimed kindred with them. Avaunt! and let us on to the festive days of the gay Riches. Here, in the library, "in which the antique gravity of a college was so sin-

gularly blended with all that female wit and grace could devise to embellish a drawing-room, the handsome visage of the ill-fated Buckingham, his suit of sable velvet close cut; his peruke, already inclining to the love-lock, was seen." Buckingham is gone, and the scene changes and discloses Fairfax in his armour; his long and melancholy, yet not unpleasing countenance, turned towards Rich doubtingly, for Rich was trusted by no man. He who had received no measure of obligation from King Charles, and "had continued to flourish more than any man in the court when the weather was fair," was no subject of confidence with Fairfax. And behold! Rich is a prisoner—civilly, be it said—in his own house; and the hall resounds with deep murmurings of voices that were meant to pray, but seemed to growl, led by some fanatical preacher.

All has passed away: and Mary, that Countess of Warwick who was a daughter of the House of Cork, is seen here in her devout widowhood, writing "Occasional Meditations upon Sundry Subjects," a simile in one of which had the honour of being imitated by Addison. This countess was the progenitrix of the social characteristics of Holland House. She was the foundress and inventress, says one of her admirers, of a new science, the art of obliging,—"great in a thousand things besides," which she counted but "loss for the excellence of the knowledge of Christ Jesus our Lord."

She passed away, and Addison might be seen wooing

her great and shrewish successor, his Countess of Warwick; or leading to Heaven, by precept, the youth who loved earthly pleasures too well; or resigning, in hopeless disease, his post as secretary of state in a set letter to his royal master; or dying, inch by inch; or ——; but *his* vision has been already before us.

So Chesterfield, and a host of others, spring forth from that ancient porch since that the old house, long shut up (the Riches are clean gone), has been opened again for the Wiltshire squire's family, and the peer whose maxim it was, as Burns says, to

> "Keek through every other man,
> Wi' sharpen'd sly inspection,"

appears in his court suit and blue riband; and tried, but tried in vain, we should think, his incomparable skill in the art of bamboozle upon his friend Fox, whose character he has so sharply, yet, at the same time, so leniently, set off; and Chesterfield's smile—laughter being abjured by him as a vulgar indulgence—his compliment and polished anecdote carrying the sting muffled, are contrasted in that gilt chamber with the coarse ribaldry and outrageous gaiety of Walpole, whose native coarseness no habits of intercourse with the refined could quench. And Holland House is already assuming her mark of distinction, that of being the very centre of all the minor charities of life; all the great men and women who congregated there seemed (to use an expression of Horace Walpole when speak-

ing of Gray) "*to be in flower,*" whilst they paraded her saloons or lounged in her libraries.

Too soon for the ambition of Henry Fox did Holland House lose her political coteries; long silent were her turrets, during the minority of the late Lord Holland, until, upon his rise to manhood and to pre-eminence, a new race of the *élite* appeared beneath the rich ceilings framed by Rich.

Gladly would one pass over that dissolute but entertaining clique, the George Selwyn, who contributed to poison the mind of the young Charles James, then in his eighteenth year; gladly would one forget that early and fatal entanglement in play, which even then laid Fox under disgraceful obligations.

Another group attends at Holland House, and the names of Sheridan, Erskine, Burke, and Windham resound in her entrance-hall; and of these the most approachable, the most loveable in private society, was the last. His manners were noble, polished, courteous; his spirits so gay that, even in the decline of life, he was the youngest of the young. "Over his whole conversation," thus writes a contemporary, "was flung a veil of unrent classical elegance; through no crevice, had there been any, would ever an unkind or an unconditioned sentiment have found entrance." Again a break in the vast current of mighty intellects, and Mackintosh, tall, cold in aspect, kindly at heart, referred to as the very pattern-book of all knowledge, greatly independent, benignantly serene, sits at the table of the noble host by the side of De Staël. Her *preoccupation*

with him, to use a foreign phrase, was so extreme that some doubted whether the great Scot liked it, yet he always spoke of her with that calm enthusiasm which was peculiarly his own attribute. And here, smiling, singing, charming all hearts, was the gay bard of Erin; whilst by his side, a boy poet, little known, coldly, and, indeed, unkindly received by his kindred, gazed upon the scene; and Byron's clear blue eye looked frozen upon it, for it was long ere he could identify his shy and proud nature with that of the courteous and the free around him. His eyes, be it observed, had that peculiar faculty of being enabled to seem quite glazed and lifeless, as if suddenly congealed; and then they could glance such glances as only beam from spirits so fine, so fierce.

To pursue the theme were endless. All is gone, all has passed away! That which this great metropolis *most* wants—its greatest, its almost only intellectual want—is an easy resort of the lettered and the gifted. No public institutions will do. One sickens at the thought. To establish one's self by privilege among lions, to go anywhere expressly to be wise, is enough to put a super crust of pride and indifference on any honest nature. All good society must be private. Holland House has ceased to be the centre of all that refines, interests, and elevates society. We have now no centre, our commonwealth of letters is turned upside down. It wants a protector; and yet, to use a metaphor seemingly inconsistent, sighs for the blessed days of a restoration.

CHAP. V.

MRS. MONTAGU, AND HER FRIENDS.

The remembrance of those brilliant circles which I think can never be adequately described, revives certain cogitations upon the state of literary society in our own times. If I offer some slight remarks upon that theme — if I recall the past with reference to the present, it is without any ambition to distrust, any intention to dispraise. My strictures are slight — enforce no moral — and offer the picture of what *has* been, without presuming to add a motto of didactic impertinence, by way of application.

For many years — indeed until the last fifteen years — the pursuits of literature were in danger of being converted into a mere trade among us. Things were painfully altered since those days when *not* to shine in the wide field of letters was to want one qualification of the highest fashion; such days were clean gone — obscured, at all events — and the disinterested reapers in that glorious glebe seemed to be extinct.

A new era has, however, arrived; and, by a general impulse, society has practically acknowledged, that, whilst to some the profession of literary tastes may be convenient, to all it is graceful. Our weekly journals

are spangled with noble names; our lowest circulating libraries dignify their sign-boards with "Honourables," obtained at the rate of threepence a volume; smart broughams, garnished with coronets, stand at the doors of publishers, patient at the *dictum* of some invisible "reader;" impassioned verses, penned by fair hands, which grasped last night the jewelled finger of a peer, in the gay quadrille, find entrance to-day in periodicals. The list of noble, if not of royal, authors is swelled daily; and a new edition of Horace Walpole's savage, partial, but delightful book — his "Royal and Noble Authors" — is now a desideratum to bring it down to the last effort of feminine genius. I know not how this may tell upon our literary reputation as a nation; but that it will raise and refine the tone of society, there can be little doubt. Yet, still something is wanting — a rallying point, a leader, a polar star: such as, perhaps, may never shine again. We want a Queen of Literature — a lady of condition, of some talent, some acquirement, of high reputation and graceful manners, who may draw around her the cultured and the gifted, and secure to literature the place in social life to which it so eminently deserves to attain.

Peculiarly fitted by birth, disposition, and education, to hold the post which she occupied for more than half a century, Elizabeth Montagu recurs to remembrance, as embodying that vision of an influential and benignant spirit, effecting within its congenial sphere all that was most suited to enlighten social life. Or, to borrow

Cowper's elegant praise, in his verses on Mrs. Montagu's celebrated feather hangings: —

"There genius, learning, fancy, wit,
Their ruffled plumage calm refit
(For stormy troubles loudest roar
Around their flight who highest soar),
And in her eye, and by her aid,
Shine safe, without a fear to fade."

Mrs. Montagu is one of the best specimens on record of that most comprehensive character — a woman of the world; for she was *of* the world, yet not corrupted by it. Her wit, displayed in the girlish effusions of a satire, and rather the result of high spirits than of a sarcastic tone, improved as age advanced. Passionately fond of society, a lover of celebrity, she displayed, nevertheless, a perfect contentment when deprived of excitement by any accident; and, whilst she courted the great, she was courteous and bountiful to the small.

In her youth, tainted by the opinions of Dr. Conyers Middleton, she is said to have been sceptical—probably only unthinking; but in her maturer years she lost that revolting attribute of the *esprit fort*, which confounds presumption with philosophy. She became earnestly, but cheerfully and practically, pious. Reared in prosperity, her sympathy with suffering was one of the most beautiful traits of her generous nature. Upon this superstructure one of the fairest specimens of womankind was framed. To a ready but good-tempered wit Mrs. Montagu united great charms of person; and the gentleness and loveliness of her ap-

pearance and manners disarmed the admiration which might otherwise have been tinctured with fear. Her features were strongly marked, yet delicate, expressing an elevation of sentiment befitting the most exalted condition. Her deep blue eyes were set off by a most brilliant complexion, and were full of animation. Her eyebrows were high and arched; but the bright physiognomy was softened by its feminine delicacy, and the spirit and dash of her deportment were subdued by a stature not above the middle height, and by a slight stoop. In after life that peculiar and undefinable charm which we call high breeding — an expression, thoughtful and yet lively, kept up, though in a different manner, the attractions of her appearance. It was not a matter of wonder that the scholar and the statesman delighted in her conversation; for her mind was continually progressing, not only from her own efforts to improve it, but from the insensible collision with superior understandings.

Her letters present the best views of her character, and form, in truth, her history. We find her the blithe country damsel, the daughter of a Yorkshire squire, by name, Matthew Robinson. Her mother was a Miss Drake, and, amongst other properties, heiress to the estate of Coveney, in Cambridgeshire,—a circumstance which drew the family much into that county, and influenced greatly the intellectual progress of the young Elizabeth. For she became almost the pupil of the celebrated Conyers Middleton, who had married her grandmother, Mrs. Drake; and during a considerable

period of her childhood, she was to be seen sitting among grave professors, listening—her fair young face turned to them—to their disquisitions, of which she was required to give an account to Dr. Middleton, who thus exercised her mind and the powers of her attention, when they retired.

Next she appears, a girl of fourteen, as a correspondent of the daughter of the minister Harley, the great Duchess of Portland; with whom her intimacy never broke through the forms of ceremony usual in those times, and whom, in the hey-day of their friendship, Mrs. Montagu never addressed otherwise than as "Madam." And now shines forth the incipient *belle* and woman of the world, impatient under the dulness of a country life, and lamenting that she had nothing wherewith to entertain her grace. "If I should preach a sermon on an old woman who died yesterday, you would think it a dry subject; or, if I should tell you my papa's dogs have devoured my young turkeys, you would rather laugh than pity me:" but, even in the midst of this trifling, the literary propensities are alluded to, though not in the most hopeful manner. "Your grace desired me," she says, "to send you some verses. I have not heard so much as a rhyme lately; and I believe the muses have all got agues in this country." We trace the gay damsel through all her snatches at country pleasure, dearer, perhaps, in aftertimes to her memory, than the subsequent splendour of her town dinners and routs; we follow her going eight miles "to dance to the music of a blind fiddler, and returning at two o'clock

in the morning mightily well pleased." Next we find her, at the grand epoch of a woman's life, though scarcely eighteen, thinking of matrimony, with very liberal notions on the subject of love: liking, generally, six or eight men at a time, yet never loving one; and expecting in her future helpmate only that he should have "constancy to like her as long as other people do; that is, till her face was wrinkled by age, or scarred with the smallpox: after which, she should expect civility in the room of love."

"All I can hope of mortal man,
Is to love me while he can."

And so she goes on, thinking, as she merrily says, "that Solomon was in the wrong when he said, 'all was vanity and vexation of spirit;' he ought to have said, 'all was vanity or vexation of spirit;'" and being very willing to take the vexation, if allowed the previous vanity.

After an uneventful girlhood, varied by fears of the smallpox, which drove her to retreat to an old manor-house, where a "grave society of rooks" cawed over her head, the young wit and beauty was married, at the age of twenty-one, to the highly respectable, well born, and very dull Edward Montagu, grandson of the first Earl of Sandwich, and cousin of the Lady Mary Wortley's ill-mated Mr. Montagu. It is probable that Mrs. Montagu had not left a very peaceful home to enter upon her new career: her sister, indeed, afterwards Mrs. Scott, but called by Mrs. Montagu, from

her resemblance to herself, "Pea," formed a fond tie; but her brothers, though clever, were eccentric: their unbridled wit came into collision with their father's sarcastic vein; and the intervention of their mother, called on that account, by the family, "the Speaker," was often necessary to maintain a calm around the stately dinner, or the less dangerous period of tea. Mr. Robinson, a man framed for the world, and sighing for its gayest circles, but chained to dull Yorkshire by the burden of a large, expensive family, was subject to the "hyp," and occasionally, as fathers are prone to be, "grievously out of tune." In giving her hand, therefore, to the opulent and erudite Mr. Montagu then in parliament, Elizabeth Robinson may have hoped for, what her heart dearly loved, free and frolicsome intercourse with the flower of that gay crew, above which she soon rose in intellectual eminence.

Her marriage appears, indeed, to have been no interregnum to her sunny passage through life. She was no friend to celibacy, "old virginity-ship being," in her opinion, "certainly Milton's hell." With this conviction, no wonder that she accepted the hand of the proprietor of two very large estates—Sandleford Abbey in Berkshire, and Denton in Northumberland. And there appears to have existed between her and her husband—devoted as he was to severe studies, especially to mathematics—the most perfect *friendship*; a dutiful concession to his tastes on her part, and liberality and kindness on his side. Yet their correspondence is rather that of a respected tutor with a

favourite pupil, or of a father and child, than of two beings whose hearts were fondly intertwined, and whose tastes accorded.

Mr. Montagu was many years older than his wife; he was absorbed in mathematical pursuits, and, although a man of strict honour and integrity, had his doubts on religious subjects; one can hardly suppose a character more opposed to that of the gay Elizabeth Robinson, whose heart was, as she herself avows, set on the fascinating career of London pleasures. She who doated upon "a pink satin *negligée* trimmed *fort galamment*," was now pinned to the society of problems and decimal fractions. That she loved Mr. Montagu appears to be very doubtful: that, in the midst of the highest society in London,—beautiful, the fashion, a wit, she never lost for an instant her own respect or that of others, shows how great is the mistake which attributes to the gay and light-hearted want of prudence. They are always safer than the gloomy and reserved.

Mr. Montagu died in extreme old age in 1775. His want of belief was then a great sorrow to his wife; "he set too much value on mathematics," so writes Dr. Beattie, "and piqued himself too much on his knowledge of that science." And in vain did that excellent man, at the request of Mrs. Montagu, confer with the expiring philosopher on the truths of Christianity. One child, a son, was the result of this union. His death in infancy contributed to sober down the exuberant spirits of his afflicted mother. She bore that sorrow heroically, but her heart was touched; and hence

forth her character appears in a loftier point of view. "She was," observes Dr. Beattie, "a sincere Christian, both in faith and practice, and took every opportunity to show it." Let us behold her also as the friend and patroness of letters,—the matron whose hospitality was proverbial—the moralist and benefactress—and the centre of a band of wits, poets, statesmen, and churchmen.

At a certain extremity of Portman Square still stands the scene of her truest enjoyments. There, in that suite of saloons, were assembled all that the metropolis contained of learning, wit, fashion:—politicians, divines, novelists, poets, dramatists, and blues,—the sage and dignified Mrs. Elizabeth Carter by the side of the leader of the *ton*, Lady Townshend; bishops and archbishops mingling in easy parlance with Mrs. Chapone, or with Fanny Burney,—and prime ministers trifling with Mrs. Delaney, or with Mrs. Boscawen. Portman Square was, in truth, the scene of all that motley collection; for at Sandleford,—a place which has passed out of the Montagu family, having been sold by the late Lord Rokeby to Mr. Charteris,—she held a different course. There, writing to her sister, she thanks her for a letter which had refreshed her mind, which, whilst deep in accounts, had been "travelling from tubs of soap to firkins of butter, and from thence to chaldrons of coals." But in Portman Square she was herself again.

In 1775, the death of her husband left her a widow, at the age of fifty-five. We may suppose that her tea-table was not the less cheerful for the one place occu-

pied by a grave mathematician being left vacant; but the nucleus of that unparalleled society, of which the fame still lingers among the lettered, must have been formed in Mr. Montagu's lifetime. Some of its brightest ornaments were, indeed, even at that period, extinct in death. Pulteney, Earl of Bath, between whom and Mrs. Montagu the stupid scribblers of the day (mistaking the raillery of an old gallant on the one hand, and the sallies of a fair and flattered wit on the other, for a *sentiment*) ascribed an attachment only governed by circumstances. He was one of the widow's most ardent votaries. He had found it impossible, thus he wrote, to comply with Mrs. Montagu's conditions of their mutual happiness, namely, to wait for her until the millennium arrived; but had yielded up his spirit at an advanced age, after his busy part on the stage of life was played out. But among the most favoured of Mrs. Montagu's friends there were not wanting others, whose admiration of her accomplishments of mind and person were construed into an attachment, elevated indeed by respect, yet partaking of the tenderest feelings of friendship.

But let us take a survey of her tea-table, and offer a brief sketch of those who courted her smiles and enhanced her fame.

First, as in gallantry due, for the ladies: Entering at an early hour, — for she had risen at five, — her powdered locks turned back under a stately cap of fine lace, adorned with puckered riband; her shoulders covered with a black lace mode; her snuff-box in one

hand, and a poem, sent by some stripling author for approval (and neither hand very clean) in another, steps Mrs. Elizabeth Carter. Three years was she Mrs. Montagu's senior, and the gravest respect subsisted between them. Yet the time was when Mrs. Carter, learned almost from her cradle, and the daughter of a clergyman at Deal, had been as frolicsome as ever muse or maiden could be; the days had been, when the grave and classical lady had written to a friend for "all the trumpery tinsel things she might rummage up," "for all the gold and silver lace that could be found," to enact some part in a play; and her rage for dancing was acknowledged by herself. It is not easy to picture to one's self, Mrs. Carter walking three miles to an assembly — dancing nine hours, and then walking back again; nor to credit her subscribing to the Sandwich balls: but so it was: and one can conceive that the same energy that procured her from Dr. Johnson the praise of being the best Greek scholar that he knew, may have gone with her into her diversions, characterising the enthusiastic mind as well in the ball-room as in the closet.

Early in life, Elizabeth Carter is said to have formed a resolution never to marry; and at an advanced period, she received the questionable honour of having Hayley's "Triumphs of Temper" dedicated to her, in "her triple character of poet, philosopher, and old maid." For the benefit of all who may be disposed to form resolutions equally rash, it must however be stated, that an early disappointment in the character of a gentleman to

whom she was partly engaged, may have influenced her decision. Living, from the age of eighteen in London amid the best society, Mrs. Carter united to an earnest, but somewhat stilted piety, a sweetness of manner, sufficient to disarm even Johnson, whom she knew in his earliest dawn of fame, of his rudeness. His forbearance to her was repaid by esteem and confidence on her part: — when, in his decline of health, she expressed her conviction of the soundness of his religious principles to himself, he took her by the hand, exclaiming earnestly, "You know this to be true, and testify it to the world when I am gone." A fine tribute, at once to her friendship, to himself, and her influence over others.

Her literary fame was chiefly founded upon her translation of Epictetus, and this one work sufficed, as it well may do, for a lifetime. For of all her other literary efforts — her translations from the French and the Italian — her contributions as "Eliza" to "The Gentleman's Magazine" — her odes and elegies, the fame thereof has long since been entombed with her bones. But she acquired and maintained a high position as a woman of learning and piety. She headed the great band of modern saints, and her mantle descended upon Mrs. Hannah More. Herself an ardent admirer of Mrs. Rowe, — whose tomb she visited as a votary, forty years after that poet's death, — she has, in her turn, become the model and saint especial of all godly spinsters who flourished a generation or two back.

She presented, in truth, one of the fairest instances

of the respect, influence, and consideration which may be acquired by a woman of the middle ranks (her grandfather having been a farmer), without the gifts of genius. She showed how much industry, good sense, and a conciliatory disposition, dignify the position of literary women, who, it must be avowed, are apt to disregard these sober attributes, forming, as they do, the character distinctively termed "respectable." She proved how much it is in the power of women to raise themselves in society, and to obliterate those barriers of rank, of which we justly complain, when they keep out, not only the idle and the vulgar, but the refined and cultured portion of the middle ranks.

Between Mrs. Montagu and Mrs. Carter a close alliance of friendship was formed. They travelled together, they read the same works, they admired the same public characters. Their correspondence turned chiefly upon erudite themes; and when the gay widow mended her pen to write to Mrs. Carter, she put aside her satire and her mirth, and poured forth disquisitions upon Cowley, or exchanged opinions upon Thucydides; and such and so similar became their tastes, that their associates soon became the same. Mrs. Carter, it is true, did not particularly affect the society of men of letters; she made character one of the indispensable requisites to her acquaintance; and although Mrs. Montagu was, in this respect, less rigid, the general atmosphere in which both breathed freely was that of virtue; and, indeed, the lax practice which has prevailed during late years, of permitting genius to atone

for vice, was unknown equally in the choice regions of Portman Square, and in the small drawing-room in Clarges Street, where Mrs. Carter held her court.

Among the lettered crew — with Lord Lyttleton on one side, Beattie on the other, Horace Walpole occasionally, and almost always the accomplished Mrs. Vesey, whose husband had been the friend of Swift; — whilst Mrs. Montagu was delighting the circle with her wit, greater, according to Dr. Beattie, than he had ever known in woman; whilst Mrs. Carter strove to introduce into the discourse subjects of improvement, and Mrs. Vesey lent the charm of a good listener to the whole, — behold! there steps in an absent scholar in grey stockings, — Mr. Stillingfleet, an author now long forgotten, or only remembered by the frequenters of old book-stalls, where the student, greedy of their contents, turns over Dodsley's "Collection." There he may find some original pieces by Benjamin Stillingfleet. Old Admiral Boscawen looked on and laughed, and, in his sailor-like way, gave the animated circle the name of the Blue-stocking Society; declaring, that when they met, "it was evidently not for the purpose of a dressed assembly." A foreigner of distinction, taking the joke literally, the epithet *bas bleu* became proverbial; and it is one of the few traces of that agreeable and refined society, which has descended to our own times. For the circles of Portman Square had the requisites of ease, simplicity, — above all, of early hours. Mrs. Montagu, indeed, entertained her friends with splendid hospitality when they met at

noble morsel." But the highest compliment to it is, perhaps, the disinterested tribute of Mr. Hallam, who, in his chapter on the "Constitution of England," in his own work on the "Middle Ages," refers frequently to Lyttleton's "Henry II."

The "Monody to Lucy" had won this accomplished and excellent man a place in all female hearts. With Mrs. Carter he became acquainted at Lambeth Palace, where Archbishop Secker threw open his doors to all men of character and letters; and in their literary undertakings, Mrs. Carter and Lord Lyttleton were frequently conjoined; and Mrs. Carter lamented his death and honoured his memory more than that of any of her lordly friends.

Mrs. Montagu was still more zealous. Upon the publication of Johnson's malignant life of Lyttleton after his death, she took a very decided part against the formidable doctor, and publicly declared that she would never speak to him again. Johnson called her "the Queen of the Blues," and designated Mr. Pepys her "prime minister." Party spirit ran high. At Streatham, Johnson called out before a large company, to Mr. Pepys, "Come forth, man! What have you to say against my life of Lord Lyttleton? Come forth, man, when I call you!" And then, to use the terms employed by Mrs. Vesey, according to Miss Burney's testimony, "he bullied him into a quarrel" on the subject.

One morning, it was Mrs. Montagu's lot to encounter the lettered savage at Streatham; but Dr. Johnson

had then made a promise to Mrs. Thrale to have no more quarrels in her house. He acknowledged that he had been wrong; and the candour of his fierce, but not petty nature, prevailed over his passions. The scene that ensued was truly diverting. Mrs. Montagu was very stately; she turned away from Johnson, and would scarcely speak to him; whilst Johnson surveyed her like a setter, longing for the attack. At length he made up to her, with the pacifying address, "Well, madam, what's become of your fine new house? I hear no more of it." Mrs. Montagu was obliged to answer him, and soon grew frightened, and "became as civil as ever." Dr. Johnson afterwards expressed his feelings towards Mrs. Montagu, on this occasion, to a mutual friend, by saying, "I never did her any serious harm, nor would I, though I could give her a bite; though she must provoke me much first." The fact was, that Johnson could not tolerate Mrs. Montagu's wit. "Mrs. Montagu," said Dr. Beattie, "was very kind to him; but she had more wit than any lady, and Johnson could not bear that any one should be thought to have wit but himself."

At the tea-table of the "Queen of the Blues" there sat one who coolly, sneeringly, without the heat of Johnson, but with infinitely a deeper taint of malevolence, regarded Lord Lyttleton with envy or contempt —it is difficult to say which. This was Horace Walpole, who, in spite of his praise of Lyttleton's history, called his lordship's "Dialogues on the Dead" his "Dead Dialogues;" and deemed them "paltry enough,

the style a mixture of bombast, poetry, and vulgarism; nothing new, except making people talk so out of character is so." And, in honest truth, the judgment of posterity has rather confirmed this opinion, whilst it has passed a high tribute on Lord Lyttleton's historical work. Another truth must be acknowledged, that the way to make a man unpopular with his compeers is for the women to adore him.

Among the best of Lyttleton's qualities was his patronage of merit, that office which seems peculiarly to belong to the British nobleman. His first act, on being elevated to the peerage, was to offer to the learned Joseph Warton his chaplaincy. "I shall think it an honour to my scarf if you will wear it." Thus he wrote. His seeking the acquaintance of Lardner, the celebrated author of the work on "The Credibility of Gospel History," proceeded from his admiration of his talents; and, as Lardner was stone deaf, their conversation was carried on in writing. The friendship between Lyttleton and Thomson did honour to both, and the kindness shown to Beattie was equally creditable to Lyttleton.

It was in the brilliant sphere of the "Queen of the Blues" that Lord Lyttleton first encountered the then pale and thoughtful poet, whose native elegance of mind gave to a person not graceful, to a "slouching gait," a certain refinement. A schoolmaster from the obscure hamlet of Laurencekirk in Kincardine, the son of a small retail shopkeeper, Beattie was not only Nature's poet, but Nature's gentleman; no vices, no imprudences, disfigured

his beautiful but infelicitous career. In the ivy-covered cottage in which his youth was reared, he had imbibed early lessons of a piety which strengthened with his years; and of a courtesy which at once gladdened his humble home, and accorded well with the refined society of the starry hemisphere of "the Blues." By the banks of the rivulet, or *burn*, fringed with wild roses, which dashed by his humble home, was matured that poetic temperament which was singularly rewarded by admiring contemporaries. In the parish-school of Laurencekirk was his first love for the classics awakened; and here he acquired, among his young companions, the name of "the Poet." But his storehouse lay in that lovely scenery of his fatherland,—there, writes his friend and biographer, Sir William Forbes, "he had a never-failing resource;" and in the seclusion of a deeply wooded glen were his first essays in poetry conceived and written.

It is not easy to imagine the violence of the transition to the polished circles of London; Beattie had, indeed, when he first entered these tabooed precincts, attained something like a position in society. He began life as a village schoolmaster in the obscure village of Fordoun, at the foot of the Grampians; and here he also fulfilled the office of precentor, or parish-clerk. Around him there was no society, excepting that of an honest, and, in Scotland, not illiterate peasantry; and of the parish clergyman, where he found a more congenial converse: but he communed there with nature, and was happy.

In after-times his heart revealed those simple scenes and haunts: —

> "Mine be the breezy hill that skirts the down,
> Where a green grassy turf is all I crave,
> With here and there a violet bestrown,
> Fast by a brook, or fountain's murmuring wave."

By an accident, however, he was drawn from his obscurity. One day, Mr. Garden, afterwards Lord Gardenstoun, who happened to be living in that neighbourhood, discovered the poet in his favourite glen, writing. Mr. Garden was a man of discernment and kindness; he took the young schoolmaster under his protection, and the subsequent fate of Beattie was determined.

At Fordoun, Beattie enjoyed the society of the singular Lord Monboddo, author of the forgotten work entitled "Ancient Metaphysics." From that retired village Beattie was eventually transplanted to Aberdeen, and raised from his occupation as a schoolmaster to the Professorship of Moral Philosophy, — a rare transition, but one which the result proved to have been justified by the great merits of the humble poet and schoolmaster.

It was owing to the introduction of a friend, whose acquaintance he formed at Aberdeen, that Beattie first knew Mrs. Montagu. One can hardly picture her to one's mind in the cultivated but frigid atmosphere of an Edinburgh coterie, surrounded by philosophers speaking broad Scotch, — discoursing with Presbyterian ministers; but so it was, for the name of Gregory stood high in the list of her honoured friends, and in his de-

lightful society she first learned to estimate the modest worth of Beattie. No personal acquaintance took place, however, until the poet visited the metropolis. He was in his thirty-seventh year in 1771, and it seems strange to say, was, even at that mature age, wholly ignorant of those charms and splendours which our capital affords. He was soon initiated into some of its most agreeable resources, passed several days with Johnson, visited Garrick and Armstrong, and formed with Lyttleton a friendship which only ceased with their lives.

Beattie must have been, at this period of his life, a most interesting, not to say captivating, personage. We have talked of his "slouching gait," and we may conceive with little difficulty the effect of his Scottish accent and idiom. But let us remember those features as depicted by the pencil of Reynolds — sharp and expressive, and imparting that undefinable idea of refinement which many handsomer faces want. Let us recall his black and piercing eyes, "with an expression of sensibility bordering on melancholy" when in repose, but brightening into animation when he addressed those whom he loved. He afterwards, I grieve to say it of any poet, grew corpulent; but at this time he carried with him to those *levées* of talent a spare person, and the rare qualities of a mind which I shall briefly characterise.

His imagination was, perhaps, subservient to his taste. The cultivation of his mind had been carried almost to what human nature can conceive of perfection, his chief acquirements being in moral science. As a

professor, he was revered; as a friend and companion, fondly cherished. In literature he held an eminent place. The deepest piety, a true sensibility and gentleness, and a humility sincere as it was rare, softened and elevated all his mental attributes.

As the poet joined in the chequered society of those gay saloons, all, but especially the sympathetic fair, might remark that he was not happy. A cankering care pursued him. His wife — erst Miss Mary Dunn, whom he had married for love — was deranged; indeed, so wayward had been her temper, that the open outbreak of her disorder was almost a relief to her sorrowing husband. He had watched her in every stage of that harrowing malady, and then, finding all remedies hopeless, he endeavoured to procure her every alleviation. Their union was not childless, but two sons, perhaps mercifully, died long before their father.

Suffering under this silent sorrow, Beattie first visited London, where all home troubles seem, in the busy haunts of men, so impertinent, — where few, perhaps, knew, fewer cared to know, that he had a wife, — and where any loss that does not affect the maintenance of an establishment is talked of so lightly. At all events, people should put off their sorrows till the end of the season; grief is quite out of place while the Opera lasts. So think people now, and so, in all probability, thought they then.

But whilst the minstrel, courted and invited, sits at Mrs. Montagu's dinner-table, or wanders amid the less exclusive evening meetings of the "Blues," there

enters a lady before whom the doors are thrown wide open, and the lofty name resounds from mouth to mouth, and the hostess advances even to the very vestibule to welcome her guest, and the exclamation, "My dear madam, you do me much honour!" falls from the lips even of the Queen of the Blues. The flattered stranger is "the great Duchess of Portland," as she was called,—the female Mæcenas of her day. Inheriting from her father, the son of the minister Harley, a noble estate, that of Bulstrode in Buckinghamshire,—from her mother, Lady Henrietta Cavendish, the only daughter and heiress of John Holles, Duke of Newcastle, a princely fortune,—married, in early life, to the Duke of Portland, this lady devoted her days to literature and *vertù*. Her house was the resort of the really great: she spared neither time nor money in forming her celebrated collections; whilst to the public she discharged a sacred duty in securing to them the Harleian Manuscripts bequeathed to her by her father and grandfather, and placing them in the British Museum. Her temper was cheerful, her disposition liberal: let one little anecdote, the best tribute to her memory, be given. When Dr. Beattie visited her at Bulstrode, he was surprised one day at being summoned to speak with the duchess in private: he obeyed. The duchess, then, with infinite delicacy, regretted the great expense to which he must have been put in visiting England, and requested that he would accept what she called a "trifle,"—a note for a hundred pounds. Beattie declined her proposal, but was

gratified, and not, as a weaker man would have been, pained, by the well-meant and munificent offering. And few persons could, perhaps, have performed the delicate part of a benefactress so well as the Duchess of Portland. Her countenance is described as being full of sweetness and intelligence; her person, of dignity. "I found her," says Miss Burney, "very charming, high-bred, courteous, sensible, and spiritual; not merely free from pride, but free from affability—its most mortifying deputy."

Long lingered many of these famed guests in the saloons of Montagu House; but, by degrees, death thinned their ranks. First, in 1773, we hear of Mrs. Montagu's "state of health being very indifferent; she complains of a feverish attack, which had haunted her the greatest part of the summer." Is then the empress of all hearts—the star of the West—the good, the erudite, the still gay, still blessed one, hastening to her last home? No; she is only heart-sick for the death of her friend, Lord Lyttleton. Next (it is true, many years afterwards, in 1785) we find Dr. Beattie recording the virtues of the great duchess. She, too, is gone. The splendours of Bulstrode are centered in her funeral. Her cabinet of curiosities beholds her no more. "I had flattered myself," writes Beattie, "that great ornament of her sex would have lived for many years;" but he was mistaken. He lived to mourn over the death of Mrs. Montagu at a good old age—fourscore. For years before, a failure in eyesight had made writing very painful to her; but her vivacity, and a

singular charm of manner, are said to have been retained to the last. Her long, and one might suppose, happy life ended with the century. The year 1800 saw her not. She expired in 1799, having lived to see many flourishing and younger trees felled by death before her. In March, Dr. Beattie sorrowed for her; in April, a stroke of palsy took away his speech for eight days. Death hovered over his couch long, but forbore to strike the final blow until the month of June 1803; for a year previously he had been altogether deprived of the use of his limbs. This was not all: that sensitive and delicate mind had been broken down by domestic sorrow; and it is believed, not being denied by Sir William Forbes, that the pious, the gentle, the heaven-aspiring minstrel, solaced, or strove to solace, those inward cares with wine. "I never," says his biographer, "saw him so much affected by it as to be unfitted for business or conversation,"—a sad admission.

Mrs. Carter still existed: most of her contemporaries were gone. Mrs. Montagu, during her own decline, had touchingly written to her old friend that "her sight was now almost entirely gone, but that one of its latest uses would be to write to her." But now this communication was silent, that hand was cold. Surrounded, however, by friends who loved her, Elizabeth Carter closed her cloudless career. Her intellects remained unimpaired, and deafness seemed the sole inconvenience which old age brought to her. There are those who remember still chatting with her in her

room in Clarges Street, all around her in much disorder, and even dirt; but the old decaying trunk still firm, seemingly. She was not, however, immortal, and the year 1805 closed *her* career. And, perhaps, whilst the ink with which we record that event is not dry, it may be remarked that it is not very probable we shall see in our days such *women* again. They were beings of a high stamp, indeed, coined with no alloy of littleness or envy. They had none of the perversity nor daringness of the *esprits forts;* and whilst their minds were masculine, their manners were gentle. Long, long will it be before the "Blues" can look for such another queen; and could she, and would she, arise, where could she look for such subjects as those who thronged, at the bidding of Mrs. Montagu, to Portman Square?

CHAP. VI.

WHITEHALL AND ITS PREDECESSORS,

THE PALACE OF WESTMINSTER — YORK HOUSE.

FROM the refinements of Portman Square it seems a strange transition to plunge into all the hurry and heat of that grand thoroughfare in which stands all that remains of the ancient Palace of Westminster. Yet, with a sort of perversity, I rushed down Parliament Street, and stood before that arched entrance whence issue the suitor in his agony, the lawyer in all the bloom of his reputation. I wonder whether those gentlemen of the wig and gown, who parade Westminster Hall, ever give a thought to days gone by? It is not to be expected, I must allow, from any one in full practice to dwell upon the remembrance which has haunted me, who, to be candid, have passed beneath the peerless roof of that structure, day after day, to little purpose, save to wear out my shoes. My spirit, being disappointed, necessarily becomes romantic. Carlyle has recklessly coupled the Past and the Present together. Alas! how little they agree! The past for me for ever. The present — but complaining never did any one any good.

Well might the district now called Westminster be

termed Thorney Island,—prophetically, I presume, in relation to the battalions of starving barristers who daily frequent it;—literally, the learned tell us, because it was overgrown with thorns, and surrounded by water. This was in ages that one strives to think of. In the time of the Mercian King Offa, before whose dark era was built (I hate dates, but they look knowing), in 616, the Minster, or Church of St. Peter, —and hence, gentle or ungentle reader, as chance may be, that name of West Minster, which comprises so many pleasing, and, to the briefless, unpleasing associations. There was a monastery, too, established in this dangerous place, or, as it is described in the old grants, "in loco terribili;" and, moreover, long before the red-haired William came to oppress his subjects, and to erect, from the pillage of the Church, the Hall, there was a king's palace in this place, contiguous to the monastery. Twelve Benedictine monks from Glastonbury,—stern, yet sly personages, had from their proximity, an opportunity of intimacy with King Canute, to whose reign the first trace of a palace is derived, and afterwards with the gentle Confessor, in whose reign, alas! this said palace was burned down, or said to be burned down, for antiquaries differ as to the fact.

It seems, however, indubitable, that Edward the Confessor had a palace here, in which he lived, whilst occupying himself in building the Minster, dedicated to God and to St. Peter. Having finished this good work, he died;—the very hour of his death being announced to him by the delivery of a ring and message from

St. John the Evangelist—I write in the spirit of the monkish chroniclers—and a miracle being afterwards exhibited on his tomb in the Minster.

How little we think of all these matters now-a-days! There, where that stand of hackney coaches accommodates the country cousins who are turning into the Hall, dwelt the saintly Confessor, in such odour of sanctity, that when in the country, the nightingales having once disturbed his devotions, he prayed that the note of that bird might never more be heard in that place—and mute were the groves of that district for evermore. Picture to yourself, my unknown friends of the public, there—where the omnibuses run—betwixt Parliament Street and the Houses of Parliament, the pious processions of the pure Saint Edward, "abstracted," as his monkish panegyrists have it, "from all fleshly delights," scandalised even by the thrill of a poor bird. There he goes,—just where that barrow-woman sits with her basket of apples—followed by his grim Benedictines, holding candles to the shrine of Our Lady. I see in thought his upraised eyes and folded hands. I follow him, even to his burial, in that same Minster, and hear the requiem, and am dazzled with the torches, and am moved even to tears by the sighs and groans of an assembled multitude, who attend him to his entombment, and in whose hearts the remembrance of the gentle Edward long dwelt.

The ungainly Rufus, building his fortunes on his brother Robert's rashness, hastened to plant his greatness in the palace of Westminster. Nature seemed to

have forestalled the voice of the public, who called this king "Brute," and to have impressed on his features, his voice, his passions, his actions, the worst characteristics of that age in which he lived. Rufus, unlike his father, who was handsome and well-proportioned, had a vulgar presence; he was only of a middle stature, and had the crime of being fat; his hair of a deep yellow, his eyes were speckled, and of two different colours, and his face was very red. Unlike his father, too, who, though severe in countenance, could assume an irresistible sweetness of look, *his* visage never relaxed from its harshness; his voice was low, and he was vociferous, without being eloquent. The Conqueror had many great and noble qualities, which redeemed his oppressions; — his son displayed not one. The Conqueror was pious and temperate, — the son a blasphemer and licentious. According to the clergy, whom he hated, he had neither honour, nor faith, nor benevolence. He was even prone to atheism, at all events treated saints and martyrs with open disrespect. To crown the whole, Rufus was passionately fond of personal decoration, which led him into many innovations. I see him, in my day-dreams, in a tunic, indeed, but a tunic amplified and lengthened, so as to lose the convenient and manly character which it bore, whilst his linen vestment underneath it even trails on the ground. Over his shoulders he wears a rich mantle of the finest cloth, lined with black sable, whilst his peaked-toed shoes excite, almost as much as his rapine, the anger of the monkish tribe. His face is no longer shaved, but a

beard descends, *kept in countenance* by flowing ringlets, which were deemed by the good almost as sinful as heresy.

Such was the founder of Westminster Hall. He did, however, much for our poor oppressed metropolis; for he was a gentleman of a very magnificent taste, even in the article of inexpressibles. One day, his *valet-de-chambre* bringing him a pair of breeches only worth three shillings, Rufus's face became scarlet with passion. He bade the man never dare to bring his kingship any pair that cost less than a mark. Indeed, he had a great reverence for that same kingship. "Did you ever hear of a king being drowned?" was his contemptuous expostulation to an attendant who entreated him not to put out to sea in foul weather. Rufus set the country that example of parade said to be peculiar to the English from time immemorial; for we are, according to Hentzner, "lovers of show, liking to be followed wherever we go by troops of servants, who wear their masters' gems in silver, fastened to their left arms." So might be seen, his red face peeping through his vizor, "the Brute," riding forth from the palace, followed by his men-at-arms, rarely going to mass, if ever, and introducing—I blush to say it of my favourite Normans—that vice of swearing, which is one of the customs of antiquity still held to by the lower classes.

So superb a genius could not long be contented with the paltry old house, or palace, which had served King Canute and St. Edward indifferently well. By "Saint Luke's face!" (the king's accustomed oath) he would

have a hall first, next a palace,—and a hall he had. Amid the groans and curses of his oppressed subjects, the structure was raised. The period was marked by dire portents, and dismal accidents and judgments. Earthquakes affrighted both high and low; a comet hovered over the city; but what was the most horrible, a spring, that once gushed out pure water, ran blood, some say, for three days, others for a fortnight, consecutively; and this—for the fable is told with a circumstance—at Finchamstead, in Berkshire. As if the elements had not done enough, a fire broke out in suffering London, and desolated that conquered city.

The crouching people marvelled at these events, but the erection of the Hall went on. We look upon it now as a detached building; and, as such, deem it a noble edifice; but it was merely an antechamber to the palace of the king's imagination.

Its timber roof, to begin at the very highest point, is a masterpiece of carpentry, and shows that our ancestors had more science in them than we wot of. For it is framed upon this principle; the property of the triangle, which is this: that while the length of the sides remains the same, the angles are unchangeable; and in this case, all the pieces of timber are arranged to form the sides of triangles, and thus all the joints are rendered fixed and immovable. Thus, remarks an ingenious engineer, Mr. Rolf, "what would at first sight have the appearance of being a weight on the roof, is in fact its strength and safety." Our ancestors were not ashamed of their roofs, nor did they attempt to

conceal them, but, proud of their construction, exposed them to view, decorating them in the most prominent parts.

Of a noble length, two hundred and forty feet from north to south; in width proportionate, sixty-eight feet from east to west; in height ninety-two feet; one might have expected that the "Brute," coming home from his Norman territory, might think well of this fine chamber. Fancy him going, one fair morning, followed by his belted knights (swearing furiously, no doubt), to hold his court there. How the helmets glittered in the sunbeams which came through the windows that day! and how the heavy person of the king pressed down the rushes wherewith the flooring of the hall was covered for his service. Some of his retinue, who had groaned perhaps under taxation, having remarked that the hall was too large, larger than it should have been, were rebuked by a contradiction, "that it was too small, and only a *bed-chamber*" (thus spoke the king) "to the palace he should build." He was, however, mistaken; and the brave, though remorseless Rufus, who had figured in so many bloody skirmishes, was doomed to perish in a pastime. Some say he was warned in a dream of the danger he would run if he hunted on that memorable day on which he was slain; but as a monk had dreamed the dream, the king merely scoffed at it, and sent the man a hundred shillings to dream a better dream; and so, fearless as he was, he was killed by a spent dart, on which he is believed by some to have fallen, sped by

the fatal hands of Walter Tyrrel. His successor was vastly anxious to get him buried, and Westminster had not the honour of receiving his pierced corpse; — into Winchester was it interred with indecent haste, being entombed the very day after his death.

The great "Bed-chamber" stood alone, therefore, in all its splendour; and the Church, which had been heavily taxed, began to breathe again; and we find little mention of additions to the Palace, although the court was always held there, until the third Henry exhibited his princely taste by enlarging and improving both the monastic and palatial edifices of West-Minster. He laid the foundation of Saint Mary's Chapel at the end of Saint Peter's, and on the site of Henry the Seventh's Chapel; and he betook himself, not only to making additions to his Palace, but to furnishing and decorating it; — all of which he drew out of the pockets of his subjects. The embroiderer, the goldsmith, the jeweller, were his frequent counsellors and company. Yet, even then, the domestic arrangements of our ancestors were not inviting.

The old Palace of Westminster might not, therefore, in point of interior accommodation, bear the inspection of a modern groom of the chamber, but in its perfection (in which it existed until the *second* fire, called by Stowe a "vehement fire," which injured it in 1298) it must, indeed, have been a most commodious and extensive building, according to the wants and habits of the time.

Gallant days were those, in which Edward I.

assembled at Westminster his three hundred young nobility and knights, to be equipped for the Scottish invasion. The Palace, which had recently suffered so much dilapidation, was found too small to contain half of the assembled aristocracy, who repaired, therefore, to the New Temple, cutting down trees in the progress, that booths and stands might be erected for the show. Prince Edward (the Black Prince) meantime, had watched all the long night previously by the shrine of Saint Edward in the Abbey, before the solemn act of his knighthood. He was attended by the noblest of the young knights, in this act of duty. On the morrow, the king girded his son with the belt of a knight, and gave him the Duchy of Aquitaine. Then went forth the brave youth to show himself to his associates in arms; and the service of the choir in the Minster was drowned in the clang of trumpets. Such was the throng around the high altar, that two knights died, and several fainted away, although each knight had two or three people to defend him. At last, the altar being cleared, the Prince girded his companions. Then were brought two swans, adorned with gold nets, and gilded ornaments, to the king, when the monarch made that famous vow of arms, one of the usual chivalric observances of the day, which was the pattern of many similar ceremonies. Viewing the swans, the king vowed to Heaven and the saints, that he would go to Scotland, dead or alive, to revenge the death of John Comyn; adjuring the Prince and the other great men of the land, to give him their promise that if he

should die, his body should remain unburied until they had triumphed over the perfidious king. Before the altar, and through the lofty aisles, resounded the voices of the young and brave; and assurances were given that the Vow of the Swans should be fulfilled.

The Palace was, however, still a ruin; but was restored in the reign of the second Edward; and various fresh erections were constructed previous to the coronation of that monarch. Fancy, reader, if you can, this old structure, of Anglo-Saxon origin, standing on the same plot of ground as that on which our new Houses of Parliament are erected. But then it was environed, except where the Thames, on the eastern side, laved its very foundations, by herbaries, vineries, and gardens, both within and without the Palace and its tower. It had two ponds for fish, which in those days of fasting were an indispensable addition. It had a falconry and a conduit, and even a gaol, for offenders within the precincts of the court; and this is proved by old documents to have been situated near the well known Painted Chamber. There was an almonry, and a vast storehouse; to say nothing of a plumber's shop, and other similar appendages; all these, together with the main body of the building, of which I shall anon present a picture, occupied that plot of ground which extends from the Thames to St. Margaret's Church, is bounded by Bridge Street, formerly the Woolstaple, on the north, and by College Street on the south.

What a pleasant, suburban village must Westminster then have been; — and how grandly must the old

palace have risen, with its arched entrances, and battlemented tops amid vineries and trellices; and how pleasantly the barges must have floated by, towards the aristocratic region of the Strand; whilst dames looked forth from their lattices, or trod in dignity the walks of the herbaries, or kitchen-garden; — of flowers, there were but few cultivated? And then, there was the lesser or private palaces, as well as the greater: so that all was not state nor pomp, but merriment, such as old England has always relished vastly, went on. Of this lesser palace (for a third fire, in spite of the river, in spite of the conduit, in spite of belted knights, who made perchance too free with the strong waters, occurred) no trace is left. It was burned down in the reign of Henry VIII.; and we can only imagine how picturesque, and how pleasant outside; how gay, but not cleanly, inside, it must erst have been. It contained, however, — this we do know, thanks to a roll in the King's Remembrancer's Office, a lesser Hall, the walls of which were provided with corbels, both within and without, of Caen and Reigate freestone; with a timber roof, ornate and massive; a Queen's Hall, nursery chambers for infant royalty; a maydenhalle, for the queen's maids of honour, besides wardrobes, and galleries, and chambers, for the various members of the household.

Then there was the King's "White Chamber," which, together with many passages, galleries, &c., was distinguished by a diversity of coping; this, too, overlooked the gay, and at the same time, sparkling river. Such

were the domestic portions of the Palace; they are clean gone for ever; but of the greater Palace many tracts were entire, previous to the last fire, in our own days; for *five times* has this doomed edifice been in conflagration.

All the state offices, the festive halls, the royal chapel, and the chief apartments of our sovereigns, were on the eastern side of the Old Palace. There stood the Painted Chamber, bearing the name of St. Edward's Chamber, in honour of the Confessor, who built it, until the time of Henry III., when it was first called the Painted Chamber. This apartment had, before the late fire, two floors, the one tesselated, and the other boarded. The paintings from which it derived its latter appellation were concealed, from the time of Charles II. to the year 1800, by curious old tapestry, representing the siege of Troy. It was the room in which conferences were held between the Lords and Commons: it was the scene in which the death-warrant of Charles I. was signed, and was afterwards the House of Lords. Extending at a right angle from the east end of the Painted Chamber, stood once the old Parliament Chamber, rebuilt on the foundation of St. Edward's Palace. It was pulled down in 1823, — why, it is not easy to imagine, unless there be as much satisfaction in the present day in demolishing what is good, as there seems to be in erecting what is bad. Here sat the old House of Lords — *the* House which Guy Fawkes, in the vaulted chamber beneath, purposed elevating rather more loftily than they thought for, yet the feat was no easy one, for the walls were seven feet

in thickness; and Henry II., who erected this part of the old structure, used the vault as a kitchen, for in our own days have the buttery-hatch, and an ambry, or cupboard, been discovered near the south end.

Another feat of annihilation levelled to the ground the Prince's Chamber, or Robing-room, with its foundations of the Confessor's reign, and its lancet windows of that of Henry III.; its oil-paintings of angels, holding crowns, and its capitals, whence groinings sprang, once richly gilt, and then (in that ever accursed 1823) blue and red, two of them exhibiting the busts of Edward I. and his Queen Eleanor, carved in Reigate stone, the faces coloured to resemble life, though with gilt hair and crowns, doubtless, accurate portraits. It was from the vaults beneath this apartment that Guy and his fell and desperate associates had access into those beneath the old House of Lords.

Then comes the original Whitehall of the old Palace, long used as the Court of Requests, and honoured by the gentle bickerings of our honourable House of Commons. There it sits — it lounges — it sleeps — it groans — it cries hear, hear! and all in a chamber said to be of the Confessor's time; at all events, of a very early Norman period. What is to become of *this* chamber, with the bold zigzag mouldings of its windows, when our new palace of Westminster is completed? Is Edward the Confessor to be fairly eradicated from his beloved Westminster? *

* This, it will be perceived by the reader, was written previous to the building of the new Houses of Parliament.

I hasten from these painful reflections to point out the chapel, the noblest erection of all this stately structure. King Stephen, in the midst of his wars and tumults, founded, of course, a chapel. Such an act was the usual *placebo* to troubled souls and scared consciences.

Near this sacred structure was the little chapel of St. Mary de la Mewe, our Lady of the Mew — where Richard II. made his votive offerings to the Virgin, before he went out to meet Wat Tyler. On the eastern side of the old Palace, close to the bank of the Thames, stood several buildings belonging to the Exchequer; and adjoining to these on the north, there was an old archway which communicated with a passage to the river. In this part of the edifice was situate the infamous Star Chamber, abolished by Parliament in 1641. The roof beneath which the doomed received their sentence of fine or imprisonment, was studded with gilded stars; this chamber was of the Elizabethan age, and the date, 1602, was over one of the doorways. Its elegant appellation, "*Camera Stellata*," was derived from its rich ceiling of oak, and curiously devised. Here, in this secluded nook, was English justice insulted, and innocence made to pay the penalty of guilt.

Of all these various and interesting compartments, illustrating as they must have done the state festivities and the domestic diversions of our ancestors, the Hall alone remains entire. Of all the English kings who had enlarged, rebuilt, or decorated their palace at Westminster, Rufus alone, could he arise from the

tomb, would know his own handy-work; *his* handy-work, for the tradition that Richard II. pulled down and rebuilt the Hall seems to be of doubtful authenticity.

Many a peril has this structure escaped — perils of flood and flame. At the very time of a royal marriage (that of Henry III.), the river Thames unceremoniously flowed into the Palace, and so covered the area of the Hall, that it might, in the middle, be passed in boats, and people rode through it on horseback.

In the days of Elizabeth, Westminster Hall was so full of water that a wherryman rowed over the bridge into the Palace Court. Again, in the reign of James I. the marshes and low grounds were flooded, and the water rose so high in King Rufus' "Bedchamber," the Great Hall, that after it abated, fish were found there; — this is no fable, but the statement of the grave Stowe.

By fire the danger has been far more imminent, and the escape consequently more wonderful. Three conflagrations have I rehearsed; a fourth took place in 1512, when the Great Hall was again preserved from injury, but the Palace was for ever abandoned as a residence, serving only for feasts and coronations, or for arrangements, and courts of justice, but desecrated, alas the pity! occasionally, in former days, by the stalls of applewomen and other craft, beneath its lofty roof. Henry VIII. was, indeed, the last monarch who resided at the old Palace; and, after the fourth year of his reign, he left it for safer and more tenantable

habitations. His best days, indeed his purest, his peacefullest, were passed in the mouldering and damp Palace of Saint Edward with Katherine of Arragon. Here figured his fair sister Mary, whose gentle influence may also have stayed his wild passions, and her gallant admirer and future husband Charles Brandon, whom she loved before her marriage to Louis of France, and who, amid the pageants and the joists, saw but her image. Here figured the lofty mother of Anne Boleyn in the mask and the dance; here the gallant race of the doomed Howards, gorgeously apparelled, "with divers and curious devices of cuts and embroideries," went forth, under the high-sounding name of the Knights of Pallas, to the lists within the precincts of the Palace. They were met by Diana's knights, who were the champions of the fair. The knights or *scholars* of Pallas bore as their prize a crystal shield, and the bases and bands of their horses were embroidered with roses and pomegranates of gold; those of Diana's knights with the bramble bush. Nor was the patience of the spectators, rich and poor, high and low, met together, tried by a delay between the courses, that period being filled up by a pageant. Streams of Rhenish wine for the multitude ran, meantime, from the mouths of sculptured animals; and all this — it seems like the dream of the moon-struck — where your policeman walks in his shining hat and trim suit, or where yon beggar entreats you to buy a farthing's worth of lucifer matches.

I could dwell on these days long; for those that

succeeded them were so gloomy, so unsettled, so perilous!

Not far from his Palace of Westminster was the archiepiscopal residence of the see of York. Here Cardinal Wolsey lived in such pomp during the latter part of his career, as drew the king's jealousy upon him. It was of little avail to build Hampton Court and to present it to the monarch, York House was *too* near to be safe. Day after day, as Henry, in his days of corpulence and cruelty, drawn in a litter, passed the archiepiscopal abode, he was perhaps chafed at the stateliness of a subject's dwelling contrasted with his own poor Castle Baynard, or Palace of Bridewell. He fancied—and his fancies were laws—that he should like York House.

And no wonder! For scarcely ever had English monarch owned any residence so commodious as well as so noble. Often confounded with Yorke House, in the Strand, the residence of the Earl of Essex, it had no rival. Perhaps, on account of that confusion of names, Henry called it "Whyte-Hall;" and it was well termed by contemporaries "the glorious Whytehall;" "a regal mansion situate," as old Norden terms it, "on the River Thamise, beautiful and large, adorned with manie fair galleries, stately furnished with many delectable pictures, and such like princely ornaments;" and these were all the fruit of rapine, or to use a more respectful name, of confiscation—the confiscation of Wolsey's effects.

Let us draw a picture of Whitehall in the days of the

all-potent Cardinal—it was then in the commencement of its splendour. A stately passage conducted the haughty owner to the river's brink; there his barge lay to convey him to the Court of Chancery, or to his Majesty's Privy Chamber at Greenwich, or to visit, in his days of peace, his distrustful acquaintance Sir Thomas More at Chelsea, or to Lambeth to some grave conference with the primate. Another passage communicated with St. James's Park, which seemed to be the proper domain of York House. Near the mansion were gardens, and in the midst of one of these stood a *jet-d'eau*, with a sun-dial, and while the gazers were intent upon the dial, a quantity of water, forced by a wheel, which the gardener turned at a distance, sprinkled those standing round. There was another large and most princely garden, "full of pleasant walks and other delights;" an orchard, also, equally delightful, although in a place more solitary.

The interior was at once elegant as well as splendid. A library, well stored with Greek, Latin, French, and Italian books, to which Queen Elizabeth afterwards added a little work of her own in French, on parchment, inscribed to her father, denoted the tastes of the accomplished Wolsey. The books were bound in velvet of different colours, chiefly red, with gold and silver clasps, pearls, and precious stones, adorning the bindings. Two silver cabinets of exquisite work, afterwards used by Elizabeth for her writing paper; a costly bed, "ingeniously composed of woods of different colours, with quilts of velvet, gold, silver, and embroidery;" and a

little chest, ornamented all over with pearls, are among a few of those articles which may furnish a sample of the whole. The pictures were mostly the addition of later times; but a small hermitage in wood, half hid in rock, and a piece of clock-work, "an Ethiop, sitting upon a rhinoceros, with four attendants, who all make their obeisance when it strikes the hour," being put into motion by winding up the machine, were probably some of the "stuffe" mentioned mournfully by Cavendish, as being enumerated among the great Cardinal's movables.

From this delicious abode, far excelling the Palace of Westminster, let us behold the Cardinal coming forth to mingle in the affairs not of his *fellow*-men, (for his proud heart owned none such,) but of his very obedient humble servants. He is bowed out by a troop of gallant young gentlemen, pupils in his house, in the gentle arts of behaviour, the sons of the proudest nobles, who *board*—it is a vulgar phrase—and who serve at his table. Forth he comes, preceded by two of the tallest priests he could procure to bear his massive, legantine crosses of silver. His yeomen of the guard, often furnished obsequiously by expectant noblemen, were also the tallest men that could be found. Nothing was great enough for Wolsey.

He came forth in an upper garment of scarlet, or crimson satin engrained (for he introduced silk and velvet among the clergy), his collar lined becomingly with black velvet, and a tippet of black sables about his neck. He was heard, I make no doubt, as he passed

forth, to quote a little Latin to his chaplain, according to the affected custom of the time; or, I blush to write it, perhaps to swear a little, according to the practice ascribed to our Norman conquerors, but to which the English seemed to take kindly. And so walked the Cardinal forth: in face and form—not, according to the few portraits of him extant—seemly, yet dignified and haughty, as if of the noblest descent. And holding in his hands an orange, cleaned out, and refilled with a sponge soaked in vinegar, he ventured his precious person into the courts of law, too often the seats of infection, and always of uncleanness, whilst before him was borne the broad seal of England, then the cardinal's hat, held by a gentleman of worship, or by a lord "righte solemnly." But this earthly pomp could not last; and from a love-lorn boy, his noble menial or pupil, Lord Percy, and from an angry woman, were kindled the ruin of Wolsey.

With what emotions he must have beheld York House torn from him and for ever alienated from his archiepiscopal successors, and this after he had *given* Hampton Court, one can tolerably well conceive. He bore it, however, grandly, and, amid the regrets, of his servants, who loved him, he set out on his last mournful journey to the north. The poor and lowly long missed him in the Court of Chancery; for, to use his own phrase, as "he loved nobody, so his reason carried him." He stood, indeed, isolated in society, and the question whether he had any social relations, any gentle affections, is a marvel.

Henry was busy at York House the very moment that it fell into his power. No doubt the name was far from pleasing to his royal ear, so, in allusion to a fine hall built by Wolsey, in York House, he hastened to change its name, but the public, until the reign of Elizabeth, still gave it its former denomination; and, in 1536, it was annexed to the old palace of Westminster. The king spent, meantime, vast sums of money upon the new palace; he added to it St. James's Park. He framed a tennis court, bowling alleys, and cockpits near his princely house; and brought from the poor cardinal's house at Esher a new gallery; he erected a spacious room for entertainments, and a sumptuous gallery crossing the present street called Whitehall, and communicating with the park, built for the purpose of overlooking the tilt-yard; an elegant gateway, designed by Holbein, finished this beautiful structure. The next thing he did was to be married here—in this which was henceforth to be called the New Palace of Westminster "for ever!" for little did Henry dream of Cromwellites or of Revolutions, and, therefore, he deemed the regal greatness was to last "for ever." He gave his hand to Anne Boleyn, it is declared by Stowe, in his *closet* in the New Palace of Westminster; but there is a tradition that this ominous event took place in the monastery of Sopwell, near St. Albans, where, it may be presumed, Henry swore to love his bride for "ever and ever."

Meanwhile the *ancient* palace was mouldering to decay. What a comment upon human greatness is that

passage from Norden, in which he speaks, in Elizabeth's time, "of a place called the Old Pallace, which was sometime the pallace of a king," now brought to the ground, and green grass growing where it stood. Some traces of the building then remained, "there are apparent tokens of a wall yet standing; that there were many vaults, sellers, and such like offices in that part which is now a plain field; there are yet certain towers standing, adjoining to the college wall, that seem to have been parcel of that pallace; many buildings have been towards the mill, and upon the Thames side, extending as far as St. Stephen's Chapel." Yet these old vestiges were destined to survive their successor of Whitehall, the ill-starred palace of Wolsey!

In the reign of James I. the Old Palace was the scene of that most singular and audacious design of Guy Fawkes. "God," said the miscreant, "would have concealed it, but the devil discovered it." It was discovered; and that remnant of St. Edward's structure remained, defying all its various enemies—the flames, the waves, and the treason.

One may conceive what a gloom, what a panic was spread over London after this domestic tragedy—a tragedy of which the first act only, that of preparation, was performed: how people ceased to sleep in their beds, or to rest in their graves even: what woe and disgrace fell upon the many relations of the well-born plotters—the slaughtered Catesby, who was slain in the fray at Holbeach, in Staffordshire, where he had fled for safety—the brave, though criminal Percy, who

fell fighting for his life in the court of Holbeach House. But no! the English world was then accustomed to troubles: conspiracies were as frequent as festivals—assassinations were holiday work, and subjects of pleasant discourse; so the *beau monde* soon recovered its equanimity, and ere the ghastly heads of Catesby and Percy had ceased to stare with their lifeless eyes upon the gazing multitude from the ends of the Parliament House (for there their heads were stuck in the very heart of the court, and looking probably towards Whitehall), the town was merry again. "I will now, in good sooth, declare unto you who will not blab," writes Sir John Harrington, "that the Gunpowder Plot is got out of all our heads, and we are going on hereabouts as if the devil was contriving every man to blow himself up by wild riot, excess, and devastation of time and temperance." "I do often say (but not aloud) that the Danes have again conquered Britain, for I see no man, or woman either, that can command herself. I wish I was at home."

In James's time, Whitehall was the Bartholomew Fair of courts,—the masculine, violent, vulgar, Danish-born Queen at the head of the revels: dark imputations on all who formed that court, added fear to disgust. "Mahomet's paradise," to borrow the phrase of the worldly and satiric Harrington, seemed to have arrived. Even the ladies were seen to "roll about in intoxication." Not only was public virtue at its lowest ebb, but public decorum wholly extinguished. I cannot dilate on such days. Whitehall seems profaned by the

merriment of the dames, by the *blasé* and obsequious Buckingham, by the contemptible Somerset. Let me drive from remembrance that beings so foul ever trod those galleries where Wolsey, great even in his faults, drew his plans for Christ Church one day; demolished a monastery — in ink — another; corresponded with an emperor the next; and quietly dictated the fate of nations to his Holiness the Pope, with as much ease as he would direct his masons at Hampton Court. If we must have vice (though I don't see any necessity why courts should be vicious), let it be vice coupled with some high ambition; for when it loses ambition as its stimulus, it becomes low, shameless profligacy.

Thank heaven! I arouse myself from a fit of spleen, refreshed. I have done with James; and a purer air, serener skies, seem to rise above, to play around Whitehall. The very costume became more elegant, as if inspired by the refined spirit of the royal ruler of the place. No gallants walking about now, in peascod doublets, and Venetian hosen, quilted, stuffed, and guarded, as when James I. — a moving feather bed — in his fear of the poinard of some assassin, or of some second Gowrie — set the fashion of that unnatural costume. No ruffs, even, nor steeple-crowned hats. No; Charles had been to Spain; — and Buckingham's twenty-seven noted suits would have availed even *that* nobleman little, had he been alive, in the remodelled court. No *buffin* gowns and green aprons for the ladies; no yellow starch either, that went out when Mrs. Turner ascended the gallows, when it was her pleasure to

bedizen her neck with a yellow ruff,—and the association was not pleasing; no vardingales, nor Grenoble hoods. Still was the mask assumed,—all else was natural, modest, and elegant.

For Vandyke, himself one of the most bewitching of men to look at, ruled over the monarch. To the Republicans were left the high-crowned hat and the hood; our royal dames and demoiselles wander through those fair gardens, their ringlets shaken by the river breeze, their full and sweeping robes giving stateliness to their persons; whilst by their side is Esmé Stuart, may be, the king's kinsman, in love-locks, and a long loose doublet; his hat plumed with feathers, and, on high days, looped with diamonds, dangling in his hand, which was shrouded by points of delicate lace. Sometimes his cloak, of fine broad cloth, or of heavy velvet, was clasped on his shoulders. And thus he paced along; his form—in that perfection of our English country, before the Rebellion had vulgarised it, and planted the new where the old should be—of the fairest; and his behaviour marked by a chivalrous devotion, which was easy, graceful, winning.

The personal character of Charles was read in his court. Instantly, when he had brought thither his lovely and beloved Henrietta, the worthless portion of the nobility and courtiers seemed, as by a spell, to be dispersed, like chaff; the virtuous and solid alone remained. More really strict than that of Oliver Cromwell, one vice alone lingered—that of gaming;

drunkenness was no longer in vogue; and the vile oaths which James had muttered in that glorious gallery, as Evelyn calls it, were heard no more.

But Whitehall, poor doomed Whitehall! was not long to hold such inmates. Many were the errors of him whose blood was so soon to be shed there; but they were not those of an evil-minded man. "I wish," he once said to Sir Philip Warwick, "that I had consulted nobody but myself; for then, as where in honour or conscience I could not have complied, I could easily have been positive, for with Job I would willinglier have chosen misery than sin." Whilst he spoke, the tears gathered in his eyes. Did he, in all his wanderings, in his various places of imprisonment—in Carisbrook, within the fort at Hurst, think what Whitehall had become in his absence? Could he *bear* to think of the self-sufficient Puritans parading the haunts of Wolsey? I would almost rather recall that erring monarch, but most amiable of men, guarded from St. James's to Westminster Hall, there arraigned, condemned, trampled on, and rising, in his abasement, to the hero. I would the rather view him carrying out to the last his principle—"If I cannot live like a King, I will die like a gentleman." I follow him, in his sedan, through a double line of soldiers, from the Old Palace to the New, passing through King Street, where Oliver had his abode. I hear the plaints of feeble women at the spectacle, and note down the hot tears shed by hardy, strong men. Then I view him at St. James's, where

that fair blighted blossom, the young Elizabeth, comes to prove to her royal father how sharp to a parent is the sting of death. I see her,—that unparalleled child, as Velasquez has depicted her;—for in an ancient country-house in Hertfordshire, I have gazed upon, until tears blinded me, a resemblance of this young creature. Her face was oval, pale, and symmetrical, and long thick curls shaded its delicate features; and her mother's soft languishing eyes had in her the father's melancholy sweetness. Truly, she seemed "the daughter of a King." A presage of her doom was on that fair young Stuart face; but who could foretell such a destiny? Behold her, clinging to her father's knees, treasuring in her precocious mind his words, made by events mournfully acute and sensible. Behold her melting into tears as he blesses her, and bids her not to forget his admonition. "I shall never forget it while I live," was her reply. "While I live!"—what a short space was that! and what a life! She died two years afterwards. For two years was she suffered to linger in a sorrow too grievous for her tender years; and it requires little stretch of credulity to believe in the common rumour,—that she died of grief. In the archives of the town of Newport are the indentures by which this child of a lofty race was bound to a glover—an apprentice! A fever, little tended, little cared for, closed that career, after a few days of sickness, mitigated by a piety not so marvellous in a child of sorrow as it would have seemed in the daughters of prosperity.

"She was affected," writes old Fuller, "with the afflictions of her family beyond her age."

The great national drama is at length brought to its close. If one were to read *that last act* over for ever, it would ever be the most touching passage of English history. The gallery across the street, which had been erected to view the jousts and the tournaments, is lined with soldiers, and through them passes the King. He went into his accustomed bed-chamber at Whitehall. What a crowd of associations must have rushed into his mind!—but he had done with time. In the front of that part of the palace, still called the Banqueting-house, arose his scaffold,—I dare not pursue this theme further,—a passage had been broken in the wall, through this the King walks. Then a dismal groan arose from the dense crowds; and ominous was the snow-storm, which, on that doleful evening, covered with its flakes the mourners who followed the funeral of Charles to Windsor. Hence the term of the "White Funeral."

How changed was the scene then! Let it not be presumed that there was all preaching and no dining, in the Protector's reign, at Whitehall. No, indeed; Oliver's dinners were many; and his motto seems to have been, "the more the merrier," as he frequently invited the whole House of Commons at once! Fancy this in *our* days,—imagine even the "Tail" feasting in that gallery; such were Oliver's notions of festivity—doing business—that was all. However, he preserved, perhaps for his own sake, perhaps for the love

of art, many of those fine paintings collected by Charles, which were at first to be dispersed. To Cromwell we owe the preservation of the Cartoons to the nation; they had been sold for 300*l.*, and he repurchased them. At Whitehall he died. A fearful tempest howled through the Old Palace, and shook even the foundations of its sister palace; when, amid the cries of his children, torn by delirium, the spirit of the Protector was summoned to its account. Yet holier and happier was his dominion, than that of the restored king of these realms. How quickly, how gladly, as it seemed, did they yield to French demoralisation! In an instant were they crowded with the most licentious of the one sect, the most degraded of the other. I do not mean to defend those days, but they must have been mightily amusing to any one who was *not particular*, — very sorrowful to a good mind; but there was a freedom, a good-humour, a grace in them, which might well nigh persuade one to think that a *moral* Charles II. would be a very pleasant sort of a king for any times.

In the succeeding reign, Catholic rites were again re-assumed at Whitehall; and the mass was heard in that structure in which, since Wolsey's time, it had ceased. There may be some in the present day even, who may deem what followed to be a judgment. On the 10th of April, 1691, a fire for the fifth time desolated Whitehall. It broke out in the very hotbed of vice — in those costly apartments of the Duchess of Portsmouth, near to the water-side. Seven years afterwards the whole of the palace, except the Banqueting-house,

was again consumed by fire. The pictures, and works of art, in spite of the exertions of Sir Christopher Wren, who had apartments at Whitehall, were mostly lost, burned, or stolen. So much for Henry the Eighth's — "for ever!"

James II. and his admirable queen, Mary of Modena, were the last monarchs who lived at the New Palace of Westminster. Grynlyn Gibbons enriched it with his exquisite art, and planted near it the fine statue of the monarch: but a gloom was over it, even in these days. One bitter, cold December night, Mary left it for ever. She stole to the water-side, and wrapping a cloak around her, was rowed across the Thames in an open boat, bearing in her arms an infant. That child's child — Charles Edward Stuart — *did* revisit Whitehall. That he was in London *twice* is well known; he may have gazed upon the Banqueting-house, the sole relic of that fine palace, and recalled the days when his father's infant wail was heard in that dark night as the desolate Mary fled from the metropolis. But there the Stuart *monarchs* were seen no more.

I forgot; — Mary of Orange did take possession. I fancy I behold her, as Sarah, Duchess of Marlborough, describes her, calmly looking over the apartments from which her father had so lately fled, as if she were about to take an inventory of the effects; turning up, as the duchess specifies, the bed-quilts, and peeping into the closets! However, if she ever sojourned there (which I think she did not), she must have been

driven thence, more rapidly than her father was, by the fire of 1691.

The Banqueting-house, built by Charles I. from the designs of Inigo Jones, is the only portion of Whitehall remaining. A remnant of York House is to be traced in the Treasury Buildings. Such is the history of that palace which was to be called Whitehall "for ever." Was it a pious thought which led George I. to turn into a chapel the Banqueting-house! Right enough, some may think; but I think those same gods and goddesses, plump and merry, Cupids and Pans, and other deities, painted strikingly on a black ground by Rubens, do not harmonise remarkably well with white surplices and bands, nor add very becomingly to the repose of one's Christian meditations. At all events, that beautiful roof seems far more appropriate to the revelries of Charles II. than to the religious observances of an age *nice* on such points, as is our own.

CHAP. VII.

THE ANCIENT PALACE OF GREENWICH (PLACENTIA) AND THE DAYS OF THE TUDORS.

FROM Whitehall Stairs to Greenwich seems, to an idle individual like myself, not only a natural, but almost inevitable transition. It is a voyage, in the first place, if no violent expense; it is a voyage to which one receives endless invitations, in the shape of steamboats, temptingly stopping just at the minute when you do not know what to do with yourself. Besides, however respectable and commonplace modern Greenwich may seem to our view, the demesne which bore the name of Placentia was full of interesting associations. I put my foot, therefore, on the steamboat, and was soon in the full enjoyment of my own reflections.

How little,—thus I thought, as I was slowly conveyed down the river,—how very little can we realise the notion of England, as a subject province, ridden over by the rampant Danes, for instance; or of London, abject under the sway of a semi-barbarian horde, to the descendants of whom we think it a great condescension in the present day if we ask them to dinner, or procure them an introduction to Almack's!

Fancy, if you can, sage matron, or mournful spinster,

or soft youth, or staid bachelor, who may peruse these pages, these desperate savages encamping themselves on Blackheath, just above the courtly scenes which afterwards received the gentle name of Placentia. There, on that knoll, adown which roll holiday youths and tittering maidens, and which is now enclosed in Greenwich Park, settled a dark mass of human beings; for our ancient conquerors were always attired in black —it was the national colour of the Danish tribes, and even their standard was a raven; for black was not then a funereal hue, and it was not until after the Danes had been converted to Christianity that they assumed scarlet, and purple, and fine hues, and threw their " 'nighted colour" off. So behold them, like a flock of carrion-crows, settling on the ground; at their head, issuing from his tent, perchance, stalks the great Canute, in his circlet of gold around his brows; his powerful hands garnished with a ring; and his tunic and mantle adorned with cords, and ribands, and tassels; his bare arms enriched with massive bracelets, whilst his long ringlets, the pride of his nation, fell down even to his girdle.

Greenwich, called Grenevic by the poor Saxons, long suffered as the Danish head-quarters, whence they ravaged the fair country to the south, east, and west of that station. They penetrated to Canterbury, committed a dreadful massacre there, and carried off an archbishop to their camp. Portray to yourself, my pious layman or zealous churchman, an Archbishop of Canterbury in durance vile. But he behaved like an

archbishop. When a large ransom was demanded, he meekly answered, "My poor peasantry would be ruined to raise it." They threatened to kill him; he replied, that his life was not worth so much as that his people should be ruined for his sake. Then ensued a scene of horror. The prelate was brought before the assembly of the Danish chiefs at Greenwich; and there they cried out to him, "Bishop, give gold, or you shall be made a public spectacle!" They were flushed with wine, and on the venerable man refusing to comply, they started from their seats, and struck him with the flat end of their axes, whilst by some he was pelted with stones. At length one of them, secretly a convert to Christianity, moved by compassion, gave a final blow. The brave prelate sank to the ground, and died. Horror of the deed quickly followed; the body of the murdered prelate was bought by the citizens of London with a large sum, and buried in St. Paul's, where it rested—graced by a miracle or two, no doubt, over his mangled remains—until Canute interred it with pomp at Canterbury. But mark the sequel, and see what poetical justice achieves in this wicked world. His name, Alphage, was enrolled among the saints of the Church; where his body fell there was erected a church, which still, designated St. Alphage, is the parish church of Greenwich. And where are his murderers? where the "black soldiers," as the hating Saxons called them? where their long, fair, silken hair, and their bracelets, and their rings? Away with them, carrion-crows, to the drear north!

The wild range of Blackheath was cleared of the monsters, and the peaceful shores of Greenwich were calm, and the waves of the flowing river no longer were tinged with blood; when—conceive the impertinence!—the manor of East Greenwich was given by Alfred the Great to the Abbey of St. Peter at Ghent; and to Ghent it appertained, until bold King Henry V. suppressed the alien monasteries, and granted Greenwich, with Lewisham, to the Carthusian monastery at Shene. It was the principal manor of Greenwich which was thus disposed of; but there was a subordinate one, in which that compound of oppression and piety, Edward I., made an offering of seven shillings at each of the crosses of the Virgin Mary, and then he gave this smaller manor to Thomas Beaufort, Duke of Exeter; at his death Humphrey—our well-known friend, Duke Humphrey, of dining-out memory—was presented with the manor, and also with a license to fortify and embattle his manor-house, and to make a park of 300 acres. There had been some kind of a palace on this favoured spot, and this Duke Humphrey rebuilt; he enclosed the Park, and erected a moated tower on the very spot where the Observatory now stands: nay, more, he caused to be bestowed upon it the graceful name of Placentia, or, "the Manor of Pleasaunce;" but dying in 1447, the place, now extremely beautiful and commodious, reverted to that cormorant, the Crown.

Henceforth Placentia was a royal abode; the barges borne on the wave seldom brought anything lower

than a prince of the blood-royal to become its inmate, and queenly ladies chose it for their *accouchemens*; for it was retired, yet cheerful, the very scene for dalliance and for sport, and for a nursery. Let us see if we can bring its chief characteristics to mind, far-famed Placentia.

It stood close to the water's edge, having a brick front, battlemented and turreted; raised on a long terrace, in the centre of which a flight of steps led to the river. From the prints taken of it before its destruction in the time of Cromwell, it appears to have resembled an old manorial residence of the fifteenth century rather than a palace; but within the process of time the splendours of royalty were manifested, and the house was adapted for courtly festivities. Eltham, which had long been the favourite residence of our English kings, began to be neglected; and Greenwich, or Placentia, was the besetting temptation to expense. Edward IV. enlarged and beautified it; and even Henry VII. relaxed the iron hand with which he grasped his treasures, and bestowed them on Placentia. Leland, who was an eye-witness of the gay scenes enacted there, has celebrated them in Latin. I shall be content, and content my readers, with Hasted's version, in English, of its praises: —

> "Lo! with what lustre shines this wish'd-for place,
> Which, star-like, might the heavenly mansions grace;
> What painted roofs, what windows charm the eye,
> What turrets, rivals of the starry sky!
> What constant springs, what verdant meads besides,
> Where Flora's self in majesty resides!

And, beauteous all around her, does dispense
With bounteous hand her flowing influence."

Not, however, that our ancestors knew much of floriculture. Their scope was limited, and their flowers of the antiquated, and what we should now venture to call the vulgar kind; for there is an aristocracy in flowers, as well as in those that wear them. The rose, delicate race, maintains its caste; but the pansies, in which our ancestors delighted, and the pomegranate flower, were long out of vogue; fashion or taste has recalled the former to our catalogue of choice flowers; but the daisy, the eglantine, the chief ingredients in the bouquets of Edward IV., Henry VII., and Henry VIII., are now only wild-flowers.

The meadows of England boasted, even in those remote times, all their floral beauties. Peele, a poet of the sixteenth century, enumerates

"The primrose, and the purple hyacinthe,
The daintie violette, and wholesome minthe;
The double daisie, and the cowslip, queene
Of summer flowers, do overspeere the greene;
And round about the valley as ye passe,
Ye may no see, for peeping flowers, the grasse."

Shakspeare has immortalised Love and Idleness; Chaucer has raised the daisie in the scale of floral consequence; but we hear little of garden-flowers until after Placentia had ceased to be, and vulgar Greenwich had replaced her royal graces. Gardens, cultured with the few vegetables then known, alleys and

bowling-greens, doubtless formed the external attraction of Placentia; to say nothing of that sure appendage the skittle-ground, of the tilt-yard, and the occasional banqueting-house. But we must not forestall the days of Elizabeth.

A fairer, a gentler, a less happy Elizabeth was the first of our queens-consort who resided at Placentia. This was Elizabeth of York. Her childhood was spent in this delicious home; and here her married life, one probably of constraint, if not of sorrow, was also passed.

Henry VII. loved the spot well; and, indeed, we may imagine how important a residence Placentia had become when we consider that York House was then not a royal abode, Whitehall not in existence, and that the old palace of Westminster was, in this reign, injured by fire. The crafty, sagacious Henry, loved probably the proximity to the Thames, inasmuch as he could view from his very chamber windows the naval treasures upon which he had begun to place a dependence for the future glory of England.

In the serene atmosphere of Placentia was born the turbulent spirit of the Eighth Henry, and from his accession the true glories of Placentia may be dated.

The first signal event which occurred there, was the marriage of Katharine of Arragon to the young king. Tournaments graced the occasion, for which the Spanish bride had afterwards so much reason to mourn, and England, so far as the Reformation was the effect of Henry's repudiation of Katharine, to rejoice. Her dignified form, her large, melancholy eyes, her grave attire,

must have presented a strange contrast to the round face, over-loaded costume, and jocularity of her young consort, then one of the most popular princes that Englishmen had ever looked upon; for his very vices were popular, inasmuch as they brought him down to the level of other men. Very staid, discreet, domestic princes, have never been popular in England, unless those respectable virtues be dashed with religious enthusiasm, as in the case of Edward the Confessor; or accompanied with great learning, as in Edward VI.

The flower of the English nobility graced the lists on this occasion. First came Charles Brandon, Duke of Suffolk, whose manly prowess and fine person procured him, what we should call, in these days, supreme *haut ton;* which comprised, in those times, superexcellence in the mimic fight, superfineness in the garments of the man and in the trappings of his horse. A dashing splendour and a reckless dissipation, even to the vice of gambling, was essential to the fine gentleman of that day. High blood was requisite — not too *high* — the kinsmen of royalty were generally out of favour; personableness and youth were essentials, for Henry liked not the old and the ugly, even of his own sex.

And Brandon realised all these notions of a *preux chevalier:* he was elegant, manly, courteous, and a skilful politician to boot. Educated in habits of the strictest intimacy with the young king, he held a supreme place, not only in all the courtly revels but in the tender heart of Mary Tudor, the sister of the

monarch. What a little romance is her brief history! Loving in secret the gallant Brandon, married by state policy to the old King Louis of France, compelled when she entered her new home to behold Brandon in the procession, Brandon in the revels, Brandon in the lists, Brandon in the dance and the masque: her enamoured heart yielded, but not fatally, to the charm of a youthful love. It pleased King Louis to betake himself to another world, and, as the Fates would have it, Brandon was sent with letters of condolence to Mary from her friends. After a courtship of four days they were married, and the union was as happy as love and youth could render it, and their felicity was closed only by death.

Such was one of the chief actors in the revels of Placentia, and Brandon shared in every diversion; sometimes riding on May-day to Shooter's Hill to take the air, where the royal guard received them in the garb of foresters; sometimes conspicuous in horse-racing, and then galloping homewards to a sumptuous banquet in Placentia's halls. The Howards, and the Nevilles, and the Greys shared these scenes, and challenged all comers in the lists, and joined in solemn dancings; but the disguisings and mummeries were the favourite pastime. In the Hall of Placentia an entertainment, which has been the first masquerade described that England ever witnessed, was introduced. This was on the day of the Epiphany, when the king, with eleven of his gay courtiers apparelled in garments long and broad, wrought over with gold, appeared in vizors and

caps; and after these twelve maskers had made their appearance, there came six more, who prayed the ladies to dance, but were by some refused, as the custom of concealing the face, a fashion introduced from Italy, was then new in England, and was not approved of by the dainty fair.

There was long a prejudice against a practice which led to so much intrigue. Yet, by a law passed in the time of Henry VII., it had been forbidden for "any person to hunt by night with painted faces or vizors;" a prohibition from which the existence of the mask before the reign of his son has been inferred. It was probably first introduced into scenes of amusement in the time of Henry VIII.; when once adopted, it was not relinquished for centuries. Stubbes, in his "Anatomie of Abuses," complains that "when the ladies ride abroad, they cover all their faces, leaving holes in them against their eyes, whereout they look; so that if a man that knew not their guise before, should chance to meet one of them, he would think he met a devil, for face there he can see none, but two broad holes against their eyes, with glasses in them." The use of the mask in England at public places, or in walking or riding, was abolished by royal proclamation, early in the reign of Queen Anne; the famous Duchess of Tyrconnel, the once beautiful Frances Jennings, being one of the last noted characters who adopted this mode of disguise for political purposes. There she sat in the Exchange, near Temple Bar, carrying on her pretended trade as a milliner, whilst around her she was collecting secretly

suffrages for the exiled James II., whose active partisan she had long in secret been.

Such is the origin, such was the decline of the mask; but that was only one of the many and varied amusements which caused the walls of Placentia to ring with rude laughter, and brought an assemblage of youth and fashion to its apartments. There was, in fact, an incessant round of diversions for the courtly, in which the common people were not debarred from sharing. Let us take a day in the fifteenth century, and see how our ancestors spent it. Our present life is one of work; theirs had its duties, but its galas were the predominant feature of that bemourned-over period. Our forefathers only wanted one thing — security. In the midst of laughter, "when the heart was gladdest," they might be despatched, with but a bare show of form, putting aside justice entirely, to the Tower; or they might find it convenient to lay down a good round sum for their lives; but these were trifles.

Behold our gracious King Henry at his meals, with Katharine at his side. First comes the morning repast—the *déjeûner*, not *à la fourchette*, for forks were not introduced until a late period of our Defender's reign; in short, they were not in common use before the Restoration. By successful practice, the fingers were enabled to carry the meat steadily to the mouth; and in this way — faint not, my modern D'Orsay! — did eat the accomplished Surrey; also the glorious romantic Wyatt; and, I blush to write it, the lovely Anne Boleyn. Alas! one can fancy Anne of Cleves in that

attitude, but one shrinks from the notion that Mary Stuart or Anne Boleyn should have daily countenanced such iniquitous contaminations. But so it was: for centuries our ancestors had not progressed in refinement; spoons and knives were coeval with the Confessor, who appears to have been a true gentleman; but forks were long in blessing our island, and were for ages regarded with distrust, as an over-refined Italian custom.

The breakfast, however, consisted merely of a glass of ale and a slice of bread; and that being despatched, my hero went forth to his hawking, or his maying, or his hunting, or his wooing, or his sleeping, or his tournament, or his wrestling and fencing. Every season had its appointed pleasures. New Year's Tide, as it was called, was ushered in with presents and good wishes; a custom observed with as much formality in the cottage of the peasant as in the palace of a king. New Year's Eve was passed by all classes in mumming or disguising, frolicking away among the lower classes from house to house — a sport often productive of the most licentious freedom; and, perhaps, in the hall of Placentia, when the mumming went on, there was not the most refined propriety imaginable, even whilst the saintly Katharine graced the revels. Then, on New Year's Day came the gifts, costly enough, from the adulatory subjects to the king, who, as well as his daughter Elizabeth, always took care, though they returned the presents by others after a fashion, that the balance of value received should be in their own favour.

Next came Twelfth Day, observed since the reign of Alfred in this country; yet I make bold to say, that, perhaps, not half a million of people in England remember that it is kept in commemoration of the arrival of the Eastern magi, twelve days after the Nativity, at Bethlehem; and these magi being presumed to have been kings, Twelfth Day is often called the Feast of the Three Kings; and hence the choice of a king and queen, selected from their drawing a piece of cake with a corn or bean in it. And on Twelfth Day went round the wassail-bowl, and then was enacted the masque which Wyatt wrote in Henry's time, and to which Ben Jonson in later days lent his great powers.

These diversions were all carried on early; so that when our monarch of the sixteenth century had despatched his hasty, and probably at six o'clock, pretence of a breakfast, when he had finished his sport, he returned home to a dinner at eleven o'clock in the day; sitting down, let me assure the votaries of Francatelli or the disciples of Soyer, to a banquet by no means contemptible. It was served, to be sure, on ordinary days on pewter, with silver for high days. The feet rested, it is true, on nothing better than a carpet of rushes; but it was by no means, even on ordinary occasions, so poor or so coarse as we may think it. The bread, to begin with, was whiter than that in France. First, they had the manchet, which was the finest; next the chete, or wheaten bread; then the ravelled bread, which was coarse; and then the brown bread, of two sorts. And the delicate creatures, those

aristocratic Courtenays, and Nevilles, and Greys, and Howards, were fond of eating with their beer soft saffron cakes, stuck with raisins, which gave a flavour to the drink; yet they were esteemed by travellers to be more polite in their eating than the French, and the character has endured till now. Even in Henry's time, the French ate enormously of bread.

Lamb was much used, and brawn, adopted from the French (for it was never known in England until the siege of Calais), had become a favourite dish. The victors on that occasion were puzzled at their prize of large masses of brawn. They guessed it to be a dainty; they roasted, they baked it, they boiled it, but still they could not make it eatable. The friars mistook it for fish, and the Jews would not believe that it was part of a hog. However, it was soon established as a national dainty.

After the meat came a variety of subtleties, jellies of all colours, codinats and mardinats, sugar-bread, gingerbread, and florentines; and then appeared a dessert, inveighed against by the learned Dr. Caius, who deprecated "after mete" the display of quinces or marmalade, of pomegranates, oranges sliced, pomecitres, myrtle-berries, carraways in comfits, and other consolations to one's mundane infelicity: but the desserts went on, nevertheless.

These repasts were prolonged several hours, and the wine went round pretty freely. Spanish wines, Canary wines, Greek wines, were to be had in abundance; to these often succeeded what Harrison calls "sundrie

sort of artificial stuffe;" such as hypocras and wormwood wine; also clarey, or claret, and brachet. The stronger the wine, the better were the company pleased; and as they grew merry over their cups, they were wont to call the strongest wine *theologicum;* and to send for a supply of it from the parson of the parish, in case their own failed. This scandal surely must have been before the Reformation. The clarye or claret was, it must be mentioned, a compound mixture, like hypocras; and receipts for the "crafte to making of clayre," the "crafte to make ypocras," "the crafte for braket," were to be found in the possession of every good superintendant of a household. Fancy such a compound as the following:—

"*The Receipt to make Clayre, or Claret.*—For eighteen gallons of good wyne, take half a pounde of gynger, a quarter of a pounde of longe pepper, an ounce of saffron, a quarter of an ounce of coliaunder, two ounces of calomole dromaticum, and a third of as moche honey, that is claryfyed as of youre wyne; strayne thym thro a clothe, and doo it into a clene vessel."

This sounds more like an apothecary's prescription than a cook's or steward's compound for a jovial feast. The wine was not set on the table in cups and cruises, but each one called for a cup of such as he "listed to have," and, having drunk, he delivered the cup to one of the servants; who, having cleansed it, restored it to the cupboard—a sort of sideboard set in stages—from whence he had fetched it. By this custom, much drinking was, it was thought, avoided; "for should the full pots," observes old Harrison, "stand continually

at the elbow, or near the trencher, divers would alwaies be dealing with them; whereas they now drink seldom, or only when necessitie urgeth." Nevertheless, sobriety was by no means a virtue of our ancestors. In Queen Elizabeth's time, thirty-six different sorts of wine were in common use; and certain noblemen had each permission to import a considerable quantity of wine free from impost. Nor must we forget, in particular, to mention the beer; since —

"Heresy and hops, picareel and bere,
Came into England all in one yeare;"

the Reformation being signalised by the introduction of liquors distilled from hops. When our nobleman or knight had come in hot from the chase, it was then in his power to call for a cup of March beer,—generally a year old for the gentle, scarcely a month old for the domestics, who often covenanted to have their beer as old and their bread as new as possible. How little is that class altered in some of its characteristics!

And what was the conversation during all this plentiful banquet? What the intellectual resources by which it was succeeded? Let us look in imagination upon the supposed assembly at noon-day in the Hall of Placentia, let us follow its personages to their afternoon's diversions. There sit the magnates of the land, in their doublets, and petticoats, and breeches stuffed out with horsehair and cotton; on account of which it was found necessary, according to the testimony of an old Harleian manuscript, to make a scaffold round the

parliament house in Henry's time, the members who wore those huge bombastic garments not being able to sit on the ordinary seats. They are waited upon by cup-bearers and servitors bare-headed, who, when the repast was ended, cleared away the crumbs from the cloth with a large wooden knife. Among them are the class of *buffetiers*, corrupted into beefeaters; these had the care of the sideboard.

Silence at table was deemed an essential of good breeding; and well it might be, for swearing was in its zenith at this period. The hospitality of the English, exceeded only by that of the Scotch, was universally acknowledged by foreigners, notwithstanding the following lines by a vagrant Frenchman who visited our country:—

"Four days to spend
With asking friend,
In London fair I reckon'd;
The first in glee
Pass'd merrily,
Not quite so well the second;
The cold third day
I saw display
A *congé* so explicit,
I left the place,
Nor gave him space
To bid me end my visit."

After the dinner came, on *fête* days, the Mystery or Morality, composed in a tragi-comic style, with a strong devotional tendency, interspersed with low humour. The Mystery always exhibited some scriptural story,

most ludicrously versified (though with no profane design); the Morality had more contrivance, and often broke out into a bold originality. The famous "Coventry Play," for instance, is said, though in a gross and rude style, to have forestalled the idea of Milton's "Paradise Lost;" nor is it to be wondered at that those fierce and uncontrollable spirits, those free imaginations heightened by a picturesque superstition, should display themselves in efforts of a true though an uncultured genius.

I must not forget the ballad-singing, which rose in its style, and consequently in public favour, at this period; nor music in general. For the Tudors loved it; one of the few gentle characteristics of that family was a taste for that science. Henry VIII. was a composer as well as a performer; his son understood it well, and played on the lute before the French ambassador; and even the gloomy Mary was not unskilled in the art. "Use sometimes for your recreation," writes the broken-hearted Katharine of Arragon to her, "your virginals, and lute if you have any;" and this wise injunction was prefaced by a solemn exhortation "to suffer cheerfully, to trust in God, to keep her heart clene." Great, indeed, was the mind from which these instructions proceeded. The virginals, be it known, was an instrument contained in an ill-shaped, clumsy box, apparently the first of our keyed instruments, and was entirely laid aside in the eighteenth century. Queen Elizabeth, too, excelled on the virginals, and played even on the violin, as well as the poliphant, an instru-

ment like a lute, now quite obsolete; and each of these monarchs had a royal band, which played during dinner-time. It was Elizabeth's pleasure to listen to twelve trumpets and two kettle-drums during her repast, and these, together with fifes, cornets, and side-drums, made the hall ring for half an hour together; for that masculine animal delighted in loud music. This taste for music was general all over the country; it was an indispensable accomplishment of fashionable life.

Music, which, as old Fuller observes, "sang its own dirge at the time of the Reformation," had not then arrived at its period of entombment; it was, however, defective in originality, and partook of the pedantry and foppery of the times, eternal fugues upon uninteresting subjects being the test of a composer's merits. Yet even at inns, according to Fynes Morison, you were offered music, which you may either take or refuse; and after supper music-books were brought out, and a part was offered to every person who sat round the social board. The streets were gladdened, too, by the sounds of instrumental music from barrel-heads and benches; and blind harpers and tavern minstrels gave, as Puttenham contemptuously relates, "a fit of mirthe for a groat," whilst the tale of Sir Topaz, the adventures of Bevis of Southampton, the exploits of Guy Earl of Warwick, resounded to the eager ears of blacksmiths and inquisitive boys. In the time of the Tudors flourished the great Tallis, whose stupendous song of forty parts, still extant, affords a specimen of his dogged industry. His exertions were carried on in

the precincts of Placentia, and the old church of St. Alphage at Greenwich, which was taken down in 1720 to be rebuilt, received his remains. Strype preserved his epitaph; but his bones were heaped into a common mass with those of the great and small, whose bodies lay in St. Alphage. One verse of the inscription runs thus: —

"He served long time in chappele with great prayse,
Foure sovereigns' reignes, a thing not often seen;
I mean King Henry and King Edward's daies,
Queen Marie and Elizabeth our queene."

The musicians of that period, be it observed, were always courtiers; and whether Protestants or Romanists, contrived to "tune their consciences to the court pitch."

Since the noon-day repast was celebrated by the performance of a noisy band, it may easily be conceived that there could be no conversation; nor were the delights of a calm social intercourse to be looked for at this period, when, if we may judge by the sermons of Bishop Latimer and other authorities, every judge was corrupt. Murder went unpunished; insolence to the poor was above control, even their wages went unpaid; the very gentlewomen of London, according to Philip Stubbes, were grossly immoral. The women, too, were manly; the men, especially in Elizabeth's reign, were said to be growing *womanish:* one scarcely knows which of these two evils is the more revolting. "The old manly courage," writes Dr. Caius, "sterile courage and pain-

fulness of England are utterly driven away; in the stead thereof men nowadays receive womanliness, and become nyce, not able to withstande a blaste of wynde." The fashion of revenging wrongs by private assassination, marks more plainly the decline of chivalry than any other circumstance. The show of it still remained in Henry's days, and many were the fierce encounters in the tilt-yard of Greenwich. The jousts formed, probably, no infrequent topic of discourse, even whilst bright eyes looked out, and graceful forms were passing to and fro in the halls of Placentia. One word about the language of this period. Three distinct tongues, or rather two languages and a dialect, were spoken and written in this island, besides the English and the Scottish. The Cornish was then a language of a distinct character, and is said to have excelled the Welsh in sweetness; the Welsh was another; the Erse a third: and of these the Cornish has alone entirely ceased to exist.

The dance and the banquet finished, on some occasions, the long day. What a chapter might be written on this charming subject! Fancy, gallery dimly lit up with sconces, for chandeliers came not until Elizabeth's days (the first ever seen in this country were at Penshurst, and were given by her to the lord of that place). Dark enough, doubtless, were the ante-chambers; and dark we, in our days of extravagant light, should call the very gallery itself. Yet it was illumined by gorgeous dresses, on the gold gardings of which the light fell, by blazes of diamonds, by white plumes, and whiter necks and shoulders; for, as I take it, complexion has been

on the decline in England for these two centuries, the pure, unmixed blood of our ancestors giving that mark of aristocratic delicacy in its fearful perfection. But, hold! before I begin this all-important topic, and venture to conduct my readers into the gallery where Elizabeth trod a measure, or sanctioned La Volta by her regal favour, let me see what changes came over Placentia in the latter portion of her father's time, and in the gloomy interregnum of all joy and the brief period of all holiness of her brother Edward's and bigotry of her sister Mary's time.

A true tragedy was enacted at Placentia, when the happy, the kind, yet *not* immaculate Anne Boleyn was summoned from its shades to meet her doom. It followed fast upon a scene of merriment; for a grand tournament had been held, and Anne, recently recovered from an unpropitious child-birth, was the fair star by which the gallants of the court were guided in their homage. Her brother, the accomplished and ill-fated Lord Rochford, and Henry Norris, a gentleman of the privy-chamber, were the challenger and defendant in these fatal lists. In the course of the proceedings, Anne dropped a handkerchief. Norris, it has been asserted, took it; and the king, in great wrath, quitted the tilt-yard. The scene was speedily concluded, for Anne, alarmed and surprised by this outbreak of jealous fury, hasten from the jousts, and embarked in her barge for Westminster, bidding a last adieu to the peaceful beauties of Placentia, which she never more beheld. Three years before, that palace had been honoured by the

birth of Elizabeth, of whom her hapless mother predicted, even when her own doom was decided, "that her conditions should be noble," and noble they were.

With the death of Anne, the festivities of Placentia were not wholly closed; for here Henry, then helpless and disgusting in person, entertained the twenty-one Scottish nobles who had been taken at Solway Moss, and here gave them their liberty unransomed. The tyrant perished from off the face of the earth, and the delicate form, and stately though youthful presence of King Edward, graced Placentia. It was not, as has been erroneously stated, his birthplace; but it was the home in which his last sigh was breathed. The short span of life which he was destined to run could not, after his accession, have been a very happy period. The cabals of the great crown officers; the struggles between the young king's sense of duty to his people and love for the Seymour family; the insurrections and the freedom of religious discussions, to say nothing of the fearful visitation of the sweating sickness, must have grieved his tender, premature heart. And then the obstinacy of his elder sister and proposed successor on the subject of religion, grieved a spirit as patriotic as it was pious.

He heard of the certainty of his early doom without a murmur. The people believed him to be sinking under a slow poison, administered by the Duke of Northumberland; but pulmonary disease was far advanced. During his decline, his fears, too surely realised by his sister's bigotry, saddened a spirit fit for heaven. How

few youths of seventeen would face death calmly for themselves, yet fear its effects for others! His gradual decay was hastened by the violent remedies of a low quack, a female doctor employed, with no good designs, by the Duke of Northumberland. Placentia witnessed his agonies and his patience. As he lay expiring, he sent for his sisters; they came, but hearing by the way that he was dying, with characteristic hardness they turned back. No kindred stood by his death bed, but he expired in the arms of a Sidney; and his setting rays of reason were brightened by immortal hopes. And thus from Placentia passed away that face and form of grace and beauty, and those eyes of starry lustre, upon which historians have fondly expatiated. "He was," says Bishop Nicolson, "the historian of his own reign; for his noted journal, printed from the Cotton MS. by Bishop Burnet, contains an admirable register of characters, events, and opinions."

During the mournful reign of Queen Mary, Placentia seems to have been deserted; but brighter days were in store for those who lingered about the old haunts of the gay and courtly and who trusted that they might yet live to see sports and pastimes succeed the monastic gloom of Mary's time. Elizabeth fulfilled these expectations, for Placentia became her summer residence; and here that famous order of council, forbidding any nuncio from the pope to enter this realm, was passed.

One of the favourite spectacles of the Tudor monarchs was the muster of the City watch. This was a

guard supported by the different companies, and subjected to military rules; it amounted to fourteen hundred men. And at Greenwich, on the lawn behind the palace, they mustered, attired in coats of velvet and chains of gold, with pikes, halberds, and flags, the gunners in coats of mail. At five o'clock in the afternoon, the queen came into the gallery over the park-gate, with the ambassadors and a train of lords and ladies. Then was the guard drawn up in battle-array, drums beating and flutes playing the while. An imitation of a close fight ensued; and when, upon the conclusion of the spectacle, the queen thanked the civic authorities heartily, a shout arose which shook the old walls of Placentia, caps were thrown up, and the queen even "showed herself very merry." Well did she, bred up in the heart of England, and well versed in the opinions of every class, nursed as she was by the stern rugged nurse, Adversity, know the temper of her subjects. She saw that they delighted in military pomps and shows, graced by her presence withal. And quickly, ere the enthusiasm of her loyal people had time to cool, she had set up in Greenwich park a goodly banquetting-house, made with fir-poles, and decked with birch-branches, and all manner of flowers, both of the field and garden, as roses, lavender, marigold, July flowers, and strewed with herbs and rushes; and there were tents for the kitchen and for the officers, and a place for the king's pensioners, who were to run with spears.

The queen rode on horseback to the park-gate, and

there witnessed the sport; that being finished, she proceeded to the banquetting-house, and supped. Then came a masque, and then a great banquet, for the previous occasion was a private regaling, seemingly; and then followed great casting of fire and shooting of guns till twelve at night; and then Placentia was still as ever, for the queen soon departed on her progress. Well did she love her country-palace, too; and well disposed was she also to Eltham. Greenwich had been her nursery, Eltham her place of recreation; for often in her infancy was the future monarch carried over to the latter place, for the sake of the air. Doubtless, the interest of these scenes, in which Elizabeth so gaily mingled, not merely presiding, was much increased by her single state; for there is something prospective in celibacy. Matrimony is like the last chapter of a stereotyped book; celibacy like an existence of which the prospectus only is drawn out.

Well did Roger Ascham comprehend the mingled coquetry and firmness of Elizabeth's nature, when he read to her his own answer to the inquiry of Steineus, the learned man of Strasburg, as to the queen's marrying. "In the course of her life," thus wrote Ascham, "her Majesty resembles Hyppolite, and not Phædra." Hyppolite, be it known, was a queen of the Amazons and a warrior; Phædra was amorous, to use an old-fashioned word. The queen, when this letter was shown to her, read it over very bashfully, but said nothing; and the uncertainty of the mass of her subjects as to her real disposition went on, adding the

stimulus of curiosity and conjecture to the other attributes of that divinity which necessarily doth "hedge in a queen."

The times were still picturesque, though no longer chivalrous; and the delicate differences of faith, the partial reformation, and the vestiges of old superstition maintained the showy attributes of the old faith. Old St. Alphage, for instance, had not, when Elizabeth ruled the destinies of Greenwich, lost all its wonted pomp; for the queen, whose sentiments with regard to the reigning faith were always problematical, wished to bring the service of her Reformed Church as near to that of the Romish Church as possible. As a legislator, she was Protestant; as an individual, one might almost risk the assertion that she was inclined to Papacy. One of her first acts was to expunge from the Litany, "From the tyranny of the Bishop of Rome, and all his detestable enormities, Lord deliver us all!" for which all must commend her. And still there blazed in her chapel lighted tapers; there was to be seen an altar and a crucifix; and the Knights of the Garter, whom Edward had forbidden to worship the altar, revived in her day that custom. Out of her closet Elizabeth's voice was sometime heard, calling upon her chaplain to desist from denouncing the sign of the cross; and she thanked her chaplains for preaching in behalf of the Real Presence. Her objections to the marriage of the clergy are well known. Thus clung to her heart some superstitions of her infancy, heightened perhaps by a detestation of the Puritans, and of the democracy to which their poli-

tical dogmas tended. What a singular state of confusion was reduced to order and uniformity in process of time, by her wise confidence in Archbishop Parker! At first, nothing could exceed the variety of methods in which service was performed. "Some ministers," writes Strype, in his Annals, "in a surplice, some without; some with a square cap, some with a round cap, some in a button-cap, and some in a round hat; some in scholars' clothes, and some in others."

But leaving the important questions of the surplice, and the tippet, and the cornered cap, to grave assemblies, Elizabeth kept up the spirits of her people by shows, and masques, and dances; and Placentia knew in her reign its brightest days. Nor were the diversions in which the queen shared, always the most refined. "This day," writes Rowland White, "the queen appoints a Frenchman to doe feates upon a rope in the conduit court. To-morrow she hath commanded the beares, the bull, and the ape, to be bayted in the tilt-yard; and on Wednesday she will have *solemne* dancing." What a contradiction those terms "solemn dancing" seem to imply! yet there is a dignity, even a degree of enjoyment, in solemn dancing, when performed to a fine music, and graced by youth and beauty. Elizabeth was herself the chief performer; and as she grew older, she the more eagerly promoted those diversions which seemed to require agility and youth. Picture her to yourself, in her sixty-seventh year, her red false hair hanging like golden threads on each side of her face; two large pearls by way of ear-drops;

her neck uncovered, as was the custom for all unmarried English ladies; her dress of white silk, bordered with pearls of the size of beans; and over this a mantle of black silk, shot with silver threads; an oblong collar of gold and jewels adorned her neck and bosom, dancing away like a damsel of fifteen!

Thus she advanced to join in the grave measures; wherever in her progress she turned her head, the courtiers fell down upon their knees. Her royal father exacted this observance, and James I. was the first who suffered it to be omitted; "one instance," observes an eminent historian, "of the best of the Tudors' superiority in despotism over the most imperious of the Stuarts."

Then began the pavin, "the doleful pavin," as it was called, derived from the Latin word *pavo*, a peacock, from the peculiarity of the step and measure. For this dance was made still more solemn by the introduction of the *passamezzo* air, which obliged the dancers, after making several steps round the room, to cross it in the middle in a low step, or *cinque pace*. This term, passamezzo, was not peculiar to the pavin; but was applied to other dances also, namely, the passamezzo galliard. 'The pavin' was danced by gentlemen dressed in caps and swords; lawyers wore their gowns in the performance, princes their mantles; whilst ladies danced it in long trains, the motions of which in their movements resembled those of the peacock. The 'pavin' is supposed to have been of Spanish origin.

Then came 'the measure,' danced by the gravest cha-

racters, even by lawyers in the inns of court, chancellors, chamberlains, and ambassadors. When Beatrice compares a love-suit to a dance, she thus refers to 'a measure': — "For hear me, hero, wooing, wedding, and repenting, is as a Scotch jig, a *measure*, and a cinque pace; the first suit is hot and hasty, like a Scotch jig, and full as fantastical; the wedding, mannerly, modest, as a '*measure' full of state* and ancientry; and then comes repentance, and, with his bad legs, falls into the cinque pace faster and faster, till he sink into his grave."

Then came the 'canary dance,' performed with various strange fantastic steps, very much in the savage style; and these principal dances were succeeded or intermingled with brawls, corrantoes, galliards and fancies, or by the bewitching La Volta.

As was the pavin the ancestor of 'the minuet,' so is 'La Volta' the parent of 'the waltz.' Thus writes Sir John Davies in his "Orchestra:" —

"Yet there is one; the most delightful kind,
A lofty jumping (the *saulese waltz?*) or a leaping round,
Where, arm in arm, two dancers are entwined
And whirl themselves in strict embracement round,
And still their feet an anapest do sound.
An anapest is all their music's song,
Whose first two feet are short — the rest are long."

The Cellarius.

Thus was there a perpetual variety in this fascinating amusement; and the gallery of Placentia was trodden in the mazes of the dance by many a slender nymph or gallant youth, whose names have figured, some bravely, some sadly, in history. In process of time 'the measure'

fell into decay rather than disuse. Selden, in his "Table-Talk," laments that the court of England was much altered. "Formerly," he writes, "at a *solemn* dancing, first you had the grave measures, then the corrantoes and the galliards, and this kept up with ceremony; and at length, to trenchmore and the cushion dance. Then all the company dance; lord and lady, groom and kitchenmaid—no distinction. So in our court in Queen Elizabeth's time, gravity and state were kept up; in King James's time, things were pretty well; but in King Charles's time, there have been nothing but trenchmore and the cushion dance, omnium gatherum, troly-poly, hoity-toity." What a commentary upon the personal influence of a monarch upon the manners of his court!

And it was the queen's pleasure, doubtless, as well at Placentia as elsewhere, not only to have a variety of dances, but to present herself under a variety of aspects to her loving—and, when she looked at them—kneeling courtiers. Doubtless she was, in the early part of her life, if not handsome, yet a very dignified fascinating person, endowed with that inimitable ease and self-possession, not to say assurance, which the consciousness of high rank and impertinent confidence give; and then, such an intellect, such spirits, such bodily strength, and such unscrupulous lavish expense upon her person!

Every one has commended Queen Elizabeth's eyes—the safest feature to commend in a plain woman's countenance. Sir Richard Baker declares, that "they were

lively and sweet, but short-sighted; the whole compass of her countenance somewhat long, yet of admirable beauty:" yet no physical charms are said to have been equal to those of her conversation. "She had a piercing eye," says Fuller, "wherewith she used to touch what metal strangers were made of, which came into her presence." What a formidable being! But she counted it, as the same old writer coolly observes, "a pleasant conquest, with her majestick look to dash strangers out of countenance, so she was merciful in pursuing those whom she overcame, and afterwards would comfort and cherish them with her smiles of perceiving towardliness and an ingenuous modestie in them!" Kind enough; but fancy having the whole eyes of an assembled company drawn on one by the queen's most merciful glances!

Whatever opinions might be formed as to her exterior, the queen had a vast respect for the tributes of posterity; for every picture drawn of her by an unskilful or unflattering hand, was knocked into pieces and cast into the fire. She left, however, no brilliant testimonial to her charms when she allowed one of the portraits at Hampton Court, that in a fancy dress, to remain. It is painted without a shadow in the face; the very head-dress is a high cap, fantastic in a degree, and evidently taken from the pattern of her majesty's fool. The dress is in the worst possible taste, and decked with jewels. But not always did Elizabeth thus disport herself. At Hatfield there is a portrait of her, which, whilst it points to her turn for allegory and apt devices, displays

her in her best looks. The face is handsomer than in her other portraits—it is young. Her head, surmounted by a coronet and aigret, taking from the height of her features, is decorated also with a long gauze veil suspended from the back; her yellow hair, probably in this case her own, falls in two long tresses. On the sleeve of her close-bodied gown is wrought a serpent, and the lining of her robe is embroidered with eyes and ears—this to denote wisdom and vigilance; and truly her wisdom had too often the crookedness of the serpent. In her right hand she holds a rainbow, on which is inscribed this flattering motto:—"*Non sine sole Iris.*" Thus, tall of stature (according to her own opinion, "neither too high nor too low,") comely in limb, and full of dignity and courage, Elizabeth received in her presence-chamber at Greenwich, ambassadors, and prelates, and courtiers, and wooers. Here, in June 1585, she was offered the sovereignty of the Low Countries by deputies from the United States; and here, in the following year, she entertained the Dutch ambassador. Let us record in what state, and in how fair a scene, she welcomed these important personages; let us offer a slight sketch of the presence-chamber of Queen Elizabeth in her favourite palace of Placentia, and of the order in which she permitted her adorers to have access to her majestic self.

The walls of the presence-chamber were hung with tapestry, which now, representing landscapes or figures, formed a universal hanging for upper and lower rooms. When first used, tapestry was attached to the bare

walls; but it was soon found necessary, in order to prevent the effects of damp, to suspend it on wooden panels at a certain distance from the brickwork of the walls. Thus Shakspeare makes very frequent allusions to the hiding-places afforded. "I will ensconce me behind the arras;" "I whipt me behind the arras," are expressions which can only be explained by knowing how the tapestry was suspended. Such were the walls: the floor of the presence-chamber at Greenwich was, as Hentzner, relates strewed with *hay*; a strange contrast to the increasing magnificence in furniture in these times. At Windsor, the tapestry is said to have shone with gold and silver, and silk of different colours; and this splendour was emulated even by the middle classes. The house of the opulent man, described in "The Mirrour of Magistrates," published in 1576, is described as being "hanged with tyssue, arrace, and gold. The cupboard heads set out and adorned upon the richest, costliest, and most glorious manner," with one "cuppe cast high upon another;" and all this with a floor strown with hay!

The state in which the queen came forth from her apartment into her presence-chamber at Greenwich, to go to prayers, was such as the ghost of Wolsey might have approved. First went gentlemen, barons, earls, Knights of the Garter, all richly dressed and bareheaded; next came the chancellor, bearing the seals in a red silk purse, between two persons, one of whom carried the sceptre, the other the sword of state, carried in a red scabbard studded with golden *fleurs de lis*.

Then appeared the queen. I have said enough of her ordinary attire to show that she would not ill accord with the stately chamber along which she moved. And an admirable actress was she in this living pageant! for she did not move along like a puppet, but as she walked towards her chapel, she spoke very graciously, first to one, then to another, whether foreign ministers or others; and English, French, Italian, Spanish, Scotch, and Dutch, came alike easily and fluently to this matchless queen—this hateful woman; and as she spoke, he to whom she addressed herself sank on his bended knees. The ladies of the court followed next, dressed, for the most part, in white. On each side her majesty was guarded by the gentlemen pensioners, fifty in number, with gilt battle-axes. In the ante-chapel next the hall, petitions were offered to her, which she received most graciously; whilst acclamations of "Long live Queen Elizabeth!" answered by,—"I thank you, my good people," rose to the vaulted roof. And thus she ofttimes showed herself to her subjects, walking much in the park and the great walks then formed out of Greenwich Park.

Not always came she forth in such good humour as when Hentzner, from whose "Itinerary" the foregoing scene is derived, beheld her. Sometimes she appeared with an ill countenance, on which occasion Hatton was wont to pull aside a suitor, and desire him not to proffer his suit, saying,—"The sun does not shine to-day." Nay, if the dress of her loyal subjects happened not to please her, she expressed her disgust in a mode truly

characteristic of her coarse mind and habits. "I do remember," says Sir John Harrington, "she *spit* on Sir Matthew's fringed clothe, and said, 'the foole's wit was gone to ragges.' Heaven spare *me* from such jibing!" Her maids of honour (but this was on more private occasions) sometimes felt the smart of her Majesty's fair, but hard hand.

In her chapel at Greenwich there was excellent music. The service scarcely exceeded half an hour. But whilst the stately queen still prayed, the following ceremonial took place in the hall, to which she afterwards returned, in the same state as she went, to dinner. A gentleman of her household entered the room with a rod, and another with a table-cloth; and after he had kneeled three times with the greatest veneration, he spread the table-cloth. Then both retired; and then there came two others, one with a rod, and another with a salt-cellar and a plate and bread; and when these two had kneeled three times, they placed the bread and salt on the table, with similar ceremonials. At last came an unmarried lady, a countess, and along with her a married one, bearing a tasting-knife; the countess was dressed in white silk. Her office was to rub the plates with bread and salt; and she performed her part with as much awe as if the queen had been present. Whilst she and her co-partner stood there, the yeomen of the guard entered bareheaded, in scarlet, each with a golden rose on his back, and brought into the hall a course of twenty-four dishes on gilt plate; of each of these the lady-

taster in white silk gave to each yeomen a mouthful to eat of the particular dish he brought, to guard against poison. During the latter part of this ceremonial, the queen's favourite band of twelve trumpets and two kettle-drums made the hall resound. The guards were the tallest and stoutest men that could be selected for this service, which, after all, was but a preliminary one, since a host of unmarried ladies soon appeared, and with a particular solemnity carried the dishes off the table into the queen's private chamber, where she dined with few guests.

Well might Horace Walpole observe:—"The kind of adoration and genuflection used to her person approach to Eastern homage. When we observe such worship offered to an old woman, with bare neck, black teeth, and false red hair, it makes one smile; but makes one reflect what masculine sense was concealed under those weaknesses, and which could command such awe from a nation like England."

But all was not spectacle, pageantry, tilt, and tournament; and the polite world, even of Placentia, had to encounter, not only the terrors of the queen's wrath, but those of convulsed nature. What a fearful, yet ludicrous account Holinshed gives of the earthquake of 1570, which was severely felt in London, and partially throughout all England. It happened about six o'clock in the evening. The great clock-bell in the palace of Westminster struck of itself, as well as "divers other clocks and bells" in the steeples of the London churches. The gay gentlemen of the Temple being at supper, ran

out of the hall with their knives (forks they knew not) in their hands. The people at the theatres rushed from their seats, and made haste to be gone. A piece of the Temple church fell down, a portion of Saint Paul's was also loosened and fell; and chimneys were shaken down in abundance. All this was but the work of one minute, for the earthquake lasted in London no longer; but at the coast it was felt three times. The sea foamed, the slips tottered, a fragment of the cliffs at Dover was loosened, whilst the bells in Hythe church rang loudly, touched by no mortal hand. Then again, thirteen years afterwards, high and low, wise and simple, were affrighted by an astrological prediction, asserting that the conjunction of the two superior planets, Saturn and Jupiter, was to take place in that year; and the verification of this celestial commotion was to be attended by suitable earthly agitations, which actually did occur, in the tempestuous and boisterous winds which blew that year.

Greenwich had not the honour of receiving Elizabeth's last sigh. She died at Richmond; but her successor still loved the gentle glades of Placentia, and often tenanted the beautiful palace. Here the daughter of James I. the Princess Mary, and others of his children were born; and Anne of Denmark delighted in it so much, that she laid the foundations of the "House of Delight"—a banquetting-house, now the abode of the ranger. A fairer queen finished the work; and, under the hands of Inigo Jones, employed by Henrietta Maria, that banquetting-house, which is called by

Horace Walpole the most beautiful of the great architect's works, was completed. The ceilings were painted by Horatio Genteleschi; and the whole was so sumptuous, as to be pronounced the finest thing in England of the sort. And here Charles and his lovely consort passed many gay, and, perhaps, serene hours, before the breaking out of those fatal wars, which suspended all the efforts of taste and crushed every peaceful art.

Placentia sank beneath the fatal blast by which so many noble houses in England were desolated. But not by the cannon, or the mine, or the flame, fell the fair fabric, but by the slow process of a mournful decay, the effects of desertion.

On the passing of the ordinance for the sale of Crown lands, Placentia, now called Greenwich House, was reserved for the state. Two years afterwards, it was resolved to keep it for the residence of the Lord-Protector. But Oliver had it *not* then. The Parliament wanted money, and in 1652 the House of Commons voted that Greenwich House should be sold for ready payment, and some of the premises were sold. The palace and park remained, however, unsold, and devolved upon Oliver and his family. But Placentia was now no longer worthy of that fair name, and already nodded to its fall. Its once firm battlements, its square, round, octangular towers, its spacious chambers, were now decaying and ruinous; and it was deemed necessary, I would that it could have been otherwise, to build a new and more commodious palace in its stead.

At this time, Henry, Earl of St. Alban's, was made keeper and steward. Henceforth let us bid adieu to the fair dreams of the past. Placentia ceased to be; yet never did a nobler successor replace the delightful associations of the Tudor times.

Out of the wreck of this decaying and venerable structure, rose one of England's noblest boasts; how, out of the haunts of pleasure, was framed the retreat for the brave, the haven for the sea-worn veteran, the port in which the dismantled vessel, so soon to be laid on its side for ever, finds rest and safety.

Charles II.—few are his good deeds—intended to build upon the site of the old palace, which he ordered to be pulled down, a magnificent palace of freestone; one wing of this, at the expense of 36,000*l.*, was completed. Here he occasionally resided, but the work stood still; and in the reign of the utilitarian Mary and the discreet William, the wing of King Charles's unfinished building was, on the proposition of Sir Christopher Wren, converted into that hospital for seamen, which their Majesties had determined to found. The celebrated Lord Somers was one of the commissioners of the palace lands, &c., which amounted to upwards of two hundred. The foundation of the Hospital was laid in June 1696. It consists, in its present state, of four distinct piles of building, distinguished by the names of King Charles's, Queen Anne's, King William's, and Queen Mary's. King Charles's and Queen Anne's are those nearest to the river; of this,

the eastern part was erected by Webb, after the design of his father-in-law, Inigo Jones. Queen Anne's buildings occupy the north-west angle; King William's, the southernmost; and Queen Mary's the south-east. I do not attempt any description of these noble edifices, my heroes are the Tudors; yet can I not help recording with a smile, that Sir Christopher Wren, a true-born Englishman, gave his time, labour, skill, and superintended the whole, for several years, without any remuneration. The funds of the hospital arose partly from an annuity of 2000*l.* a-year, granted by William III.; partly from public subscriptions; and very greatly from the confiscated estates of the unhappy Earls of Derwentwater, James and Charles Ratcliffe, who both died on the scaffold in 1715 and 1745.

One word more about the Tudors. The Observatory now rises, a glorious object doubtless, on the spot where the tower built by Humphrey of Gloucester once stood. The Observatory is fine; but I would rather see the tower there, in its proper spot, overlooking the great metropolis, and commanding as it were the shipping in the river.

This tower had no small portion of romance connected with it. Sometimes it was a residence for the younger branches of the royal family; sometimes a secret abode of a favourite mistress; sometimes a prison; sometimes a place of defence. Mary of York, the fifth daughter of Edward IV., died in this "fayre Towre." Henry VIII. visited there a "fayre" lady whom he loved, and whose name no curious historian has been

able to divine. He sometimes sailed down in his barge from Westminster, to catch these stolen interviews.

In Elizabeth's time, the tower, prettily called Mirefleur, contained the Earl of Leicester as a prisoner, when he had offended the queen by marrying the Countess of Essex. The tower is supposed to have been that mentioned in "Amadis of Gaul." At length, it was beautified and enlarged by Henry, the learned Earl of Northampton, who had a grant of it from James I.; and in the Great Rebellion it had grown to such importance, under the name of the Castle of Greenwich, that the parliament took steps to secure it. But, alas! in the time of Charles II. it was taken down, and a Royal Observatory erected on its site, on (I am ashamed to say it) the recommendation of Sir Christopher Wren. So away went the last vestige of the Tudors, the last subsidiary to the grandeur of the far-famed Placentia.

CHAP. VIII.

KENILWORTH, ITS HEROES AND ITS HEROINES.

THESE Tudors! how they are mixed up with *all* our liveliest impressions! how they monopolised our country! how they grasped at fair castles, and seated themselves in lordly edifices; or, worse, visited their flattered, but ruined, subjects, and left indelible traces of the honour they had conferred, and the mischief they had occasioned! Kenilworth, for instance,—my first love among castles, my delight, my pride,—how contentedly I fled from the neighbourhood of London, to luxuriate in the shady retirement of a Warwickshire parsonage, whence I could wander, then in obscurity! for Leamington was but a village, and there were few who loved that desolate mass of ruins as I did. That castle! how many hours have I trifled away, seated on an angle of one of its turrets, gazing on the flat but smiling scene below, unheeding, meantime, as the dews of evening fell around me, that the bat sped by me, beating its wing on my forehead, and that the starling had gone to its rest! And this was from one of the Lancastrian towers, the centre of the ruined buildings, —that portion which had once rung with shouts of revelry when Elizabeth tarried there, and where the

lordly Dudley had reigned supreme in his dark councils.

Yet was not Kenilworth Castle the first of its name; for before the Conquest there stood, on the banks of the river Avon, within the then royal demesne of Stonely, a castle in the woods, opposite to the Abbey of Stonely, or Stoneleigh. But in the wars of King Canute's time that parent edifice was destroyed, and none arose in its stead until the days of the lettered Henry I.

At this period let your chronicler picture to you all this district covered with thick woods, save and except where, in the hollow beneath a rising eminence, called by the inhabitants of the village in Dugdale's time, the High Town, a lake flowed, augmented (I wish I could improve its name) by a stream denominated the Sow. And in these woods hunted a certain Richard Forestarius, who had his dwelling-house — what we should call, in modern parlance, his shooting-box — there. This, in time, grew into a sort of mansion, or, as our forefathers called it, *worthe*, signifying a house; and here poor Sir William Dugdale, that best and most prosy of men, stops short. Here is half a name, but he cannot find the other half. He, therefore, observes that, doubtless, the name Kenilworth "came from some ancient possessor of the place;" but whether "his name were Kenelm or Kenulph," he cannot say; or whether this fine bold forester, sometimes called Richard Chinew in documents too old to think of without a headache, were the original owner, he does not deter-

mine. Certain it is, the place has been called Kenilworthe from time immemorial; and certain it is, that it will be so for ever, since we shall now have chronicles in railway-bills and historians in policemen.

The woods and the lake might please Richard Forestarius, and they seem also to have pleased the monarchs of England, who quietly took possession of them after their accustomed fashion. But no new castle arose in place of that ancient fort on the banks of the Avon, until a certain Norman knight, named Geoffrey de Clinton, received the manor as a present from his sovereign, Beauclerc. Now this De Clinton found it, doubtless, a very convenient ride from his own place, Clinton in Oxfordshire, his first abode in poor, pillaged England, to Kenilworth; and coming into the woods, and observing what Dugdale calls "that large and pleasant lake" (gone now, soaked up for ever!), he built there, adds the antiquary, warming with his subject into a sort of eloquence, "that great and strong castle, which was the glory of all these parts, and, for many respects, may be ranked in a third place, at the least, with the most stately castles of England."

Geoffrey, it seems, notwithstanding that our dear lover of the aristocracy, Dugdale, must needs own him to have been of mean parentage, and, indeed, raised from the "*dust*"—a strong word for our author—by King Henry, was a man of extraordinary parts; and being promoted to the office of Lord Chamberlain and Treasurer, together with the seemingly incongruous post of Lord Justice of England, he *might* be worthy,

perhaps, to set his mean and dusty foot in Warwickshire.

De Clinton forthwith began erecting those strong dauntless towers, which have survived their younger and fairer sisters. But such was his piety, that he did not think it seemly to build his castle without a monastery accompanying. Together with the thick walls of Cæsar's Tower, which he built, arose those of a monastery of Black Canons; and there still remain the relics of that monument of superstition, or work of faith, begun "for the redemption of his soul." An arch, overgrown with ivy, standing isolated over a pathway which leads from the village below the castle to the church, is yet to be seen and pondered upon, and, it is hoped, reverenced. From this, ere yet Geoffrey de Clinton was gathered to his forefathers, emerged grave men, with eyes uplifted, canons regular of the Order of St. Augustin, clad in white coats with linen surplices under a black cloak, with a hood covering their heads and necks, and reaching to their shoulders, having under it doublets, breeches, white stockings, with shoes or slippers; these, when they walked abroad—visiting their patron, perchance, at the castle, or going to shrive some wounded knight, or to sing mass in the church, or to ride over to Warwick, or to visit the Grey Friars of Coventry—assumed a three-cornered cap, which surmounted their shaven crowns; or wore, perchance, as the weather dictated, a broad hat; and thus arrayed, and looking, it may be presumed, sackcloth and ashes, though they were so comfortably

clothed, they solemnly paraded, as their need might be, the stately chambers of the Clinton buildings. I feel myself shiver at the thought, for dark were sometimes their hearts as well as their garments.

De Clinton died, and when he was consigned to that dust from which, as Dugdale expresses it, he so manifestly sprang, his son succeeded to his honours and employments. And now, in the troublous times of the second Henry, Kenilworth rose in importance as a fortress; many people, paying a rent, obtaining leave to reside in it for the security of their persons and goods; and even the king found it expedient to fortify Cæsar's Tower, and to replenish its stores of provisions, and eventually to take possession of it altogether. So it passed out of the hands of the Clintons, Geoffrey, the son of its founder, possessing it scarcely seven years. In short, the sheriff of the county (an office then perpetual) took upon himself the charge of the castle in the king's name; and, among other suitable additions, that of a gaol formed a main feature in the items expended upon Geoffrey de Clinton's edifice. The canons, meantime, had prospered: manors, farms, mills—that, for instance, at Guy's Cliff, near Warwick—had been added to their appurtenances; and still they fished in the pool, still claimed their tithes. Their hour was not yet come. In those ages which were reputed dark in our younger days, but which we know, on the testimony of great philosophic writers around, to have been light, their power was pre-eminent. Farewell to the Clintons, who, returning to

their village of Clinton, now called Glimpton, and enjoying other estates, founded that great family of which his Grace the Duke of Newcastle is the present representative.

The castle, nevertheless, flourished; Henry III. taking an evident delight in that fort, which is said to have given him shelter from the treasons of the profligate John. And, therefore, the king chose to line the chapel with wainscot: he made seats there for himself and his queen; he repaired the tower wherein the bells rang; and he renewed the walls to the south, where still they stand in honour of his memory. But ill was he repaid, and those very walls were soon barricaded against him.

The career of Simon de Montfort is well known: a course of oppression varied by a journey to the Holy Land was the prelude to the insurrection of the barons, of which De Montfort was the very soul and spirit. He had not, however, during that turbulent career, neglected to provide for the security of his castle, which contained his dearest hostage, Simon, his son and heir. He fortified that place, and appointed Sir John Giffard, a knight of renowned courage, its governor; and that the neighbouring castle of Warwick might not interfere with its security, De Montfort made no scruple of surprising it, and carrying off the earl, his wife and family, prisoners to the gaol of Kenilworth. But his knowledge as well as his power was formidable, and he introduced many new warlike engines for the defence

of the now kingly fortress; "so that it was," says the historian, "wonderfully stored."

The career of Simon de Montfort subsequently belongs to history. The events of the battle of Lewes, the detention of the king a prisoner at Hereford Castle, affected, however, the importance of Kenilworth as a castle. For, in those stirring times, it formed a refuge for the disaffected and vacillating barons. "Twenty banners," writes old Dugdale; "and a great multitude of soldiers, were brought to this castle, which they made their station for a while." Kenilworth, therefore, remained unscathed; for it was now defended by the younger Simon de Montfort, who already began to rival his father in valour.

The battle of Evesham destroyed, however, effectually the fortunes of the De Montfort family, three of whom perished in that engagement.

In the abbey of Evesham, Simon passed the anxious days before the battle; but his heart was heavy, and his energy quite subdued. Edward, the gallant and royal youth, escaping from the hands of Mortimer, was now advancing from the vicinity of Kenilworth to face his own and his father's foe. He planted himself on the brow of a hill near the town, the rear of his army extending nearly to what is still called the Battle-well, a puddle down in a hollow in an orchard. De Montfort's observations were, meantime, directed to the advancing host. To disguise himself and his followers, the prince bore the banner of young De Montfort, which had been taken at Kenilworth. As he advanced,

one Nicholas, a barber attending on De Montfort, skilful in ensigns, despatched a message to his master that his son's forces were coming, for he knew the banner. But De Montfort, incredulous, desired the man to ascend the abbey-steeple, that he might have a better view. By this time, Edward had taken down the young De Montfort's banner, and erected his own. The alarm was soon given; and De Montfort, assembling his troops, "told them it was for the laws of the land—yea, for the cause of truth and justice, that they were to fight." But God, says Dugdale, owned "him not, in this un-Christian enterprise."

The young and gallant Henry de Montfort was in this engagement. His father had dressed him in his own armour, and placed him in the van of his army; for De Montfort had lost, ere the battle began, his ancient confidence and courage. "May God receive our souls, our bodies are in the hands of his enemies!" was his expression, as the conflict began. Then Edward's troops found out the disguised Henry: yet he resisted them; and, rushing through the host, protected his father. No quarter was given; and throughout that long summer's evening, for it was in August, the battle went on. As the sun declined, setting for ever upon the fated De Montfort and his son, the gallant pair were found vainly resisting their foes. The veteran warrior asked for quarter; he was told that none was given. Then he rushed among his foes, repeating, "God have mercy on our souls!" with a resolute despair, and perished. His gallant son was also

slain. Guy, his younger brother, was made a prisoner. Seven hours had this battle lasted, and the Battle-well was, according to tradition, choked up with blood. Many of the fugitives from Evesham hastened to Kenilworth, where Simon, now the head of his haughty and valiant family, received them. And here, guarded by an effective garrison, he continued to live in almost regal power. His castle was the very centre of discontent and sedition, and it became the seat of arbitrary feudal power. From the stately tower of Cæsar the reckless De Montfort, now the second Earl of Leicester, sent forth his bailiffs and officers, like a king; his soldiers spoiling, burning, plundering, and destroying the houses, and towns, and lordships of their adversaries. He led, in short, a sort of Rob Roy warfare; carrying off cattle, imprisoning many, fining them for their liberty.

But this could not endure for ever; and presently it was found that the royal forces had advanced to Warwick, there to await reinforcements, and then to attack Kenilworth.

That princely building was still, however, spared. Simon fled to France, for he saw that his ruin was impending; and he left the castle under the control of Henry de Hastings, telling him to defend it stoutly, and assuring him that he should be relieved. On the day after the Feast of St. John the Baptist, however, it was begirt by the king's troops; and a message was sent to summon it to surrender.

But the garrison was inflexible; the messengers were

repulsed with engines casting great stones; and the king, and even the pope's legate, Ottabon, who excommunicated them at once, did not daunt De Hastings and his men.

A wise and merciful resource for storming the castle was then adopted. For the king dreaded again "imbruing the kingdom in streams of blood." He therefore called together, under the authority of the legate, a convention of the clergy and laity, to determine what was to be done with the estates of those who were disinherited; and hence was framed the famous *Dictum de Kenilworth*, published in 1266, in the fifty-first year of Henry III. Of this, the chief article of import to our subject is the power given to every disinherited person to redeem his land by a fine proportioned according to the nature of his offence; and this *dictum* was proclaimed in the collegiate church of St. Mary, at Warwick, the following Sunday; the king, his council, and a great auditory of all estates and degrees attending.

So Kenilworth stood, in all her integrity and beauty, and again set her foes at defiance. But the De Montforts owned it no more. Still danger threatened the noble pile, for De Montfort contemptuously rejected the proffered mercy of the king, which travelled after him to Ely, and disclaimed the authority of the council, since "he had no voice in it;" "at which the king," writes our grave and loyal historian, "was greatly moved, and gave orders to storm the castle."

He issued, therefore, a special writ to the sheriff of

Warwickshire, to bring in all the masons and other labourers within his precinct (now called pioneers), with their hatchets, pickaxes, and tools, to Northampton, to await his orders.

Meantime, however, an epidemic raged within the towers of Kenilworth, and the hearts of the garrison sank within them. Their provisions became scarce; and, after some deliberation, they agreed to the king's terms. No undue advantage of their misery was taken by the merciful Henry; the governor had four days allowed him to remove his goods from the castle; and Henry, journeying to Osney, near Oxford, celebrated the nativity of our Saviour with great joy.

Henceforth Kenilworth was to become a royal residence; for Henry bestowed it on his younger son, Edmund, created, after the death of De Montfort, Earl of Leicester and Duke of Lancaster. And here, with a modified and respectable degree of power, this young prince seems to have made himself comfortable enough. He had his two mills standing on the lake; and several freeholders, who held of him by suit and fealty. He owned two woods; the one called the Frith, the other the Park, then common. He had his court-leet, his *gallows*, assize of bread and beer, and a market—or, as my dear and respected Sir William Dugdale, Garter King-at-arms, writes it, doubtless with great propriety, "mercate"—on Tuesdays. Not only was this everyday power exhibited to the enthralled tenantry; but galas were held, such as we moderns would give half our fortunes to have witnessed. I mean the famous

Round Table, which was established at Kenilworth, in 1279, by Roger Mortimer, Earl of March, its chief, "and the occasion thereof." Now, the Round Table was a knightly game, consisting of one hundred knights and as many ladies, who, for exercise of arms, came together to assemble in the stately chambers of Kenilworth. And the very cause and spirit of this institution were derived from feudal pride and power. It was suggested, in order to avoid contention about precedency, and was rather a revival than a novelty, the custom of the Round Table being one of great antiquity. Gaily and gallantly were the games conducted, from the Feast of St. Matthew the Apostle even until Michaelmas. The tilt-yard was thronged with brave competitors and the hall with ladies dancing, and clad, when they assembled round the table, in silk mantles to show their degree. The banquet was afterwards held at the Round Table. Many knights came from foreign countries for the exercise of arms. The Round Table was eventually perpetuated by Edward III., who built at Winchester a house called the Round Table, of "an exceeding compasse to the exercise of like, or farre greater chevalry within."

These were the bright days of Kenilworth; but a cloud soon impended over its battlements, for owing to the treason of Thomas, Earl of Lancaster, in the reign of Richard II. it reverted a second time to the Crown; and that unfortunate monarch contemplated making Kenilworth his place of retirement, and trusted then to be in safety. He was, however, carried off to

Berkeley Castle, and there, according to the received accounts, barbarously murdered.

In the reign of Edward III. the Lancaster family were restored in blood, and again owned, among their other possessions, this castle. Blanch, the co-heiress with her sister Maud of the last Earl of Lancaster, became the wife of John of Gaunt; and upon her father's property being divided, this portion of it fell to her share; and henceforth Kenilworth owned for its master no less a personage than John of Gaunt.

That worthy Plantagenet had a soul. Hitherto strength, not domestic convenience, had been the aim of the feudal owners of the castle; he now resolved to render it a suitable abode for the brother of Edward III. At this era, indeed, a degree of convenience and splendour in such edifices, superseded the rude arrangements of our ancestors. So there arose, towards the latter end of the reign of Richard II., those light and beautiful buildings, still called the Lancaster buildings, comprising the now ruined hall, the buttery, the kitchen, the chapel, many sleeping apartments in turrets, and sundry cellars and dungeons. Most delicate is their architectural beauty! and as the structure progressed, John of Gaunt put it under the charge of John d'Eyncourt, the ancestor of the time-honoured family of that name.

But it was doomed that Kenilworth was never long to remain in the possession of a subject. To John of Gaunt succeeded his son, Henry Bolingbroke, afterwards Henry IV.; and this castle, a part of his posses-

sions, was again attached to the crown, and attached it remained until the days of Queen Elizabeth. Here Henry V. built a tower, so close upon the pool as to acquire the name of *Le Plesans en Marys.* It was removed by Henry VIII., who pulled it down, and rebuilt it in the base-court of the castle, near what is still called the Swan Tower.

The annals of Kenilworth are mute until it became, by the gift of Elizabeth, the stately possession of Robert Dudley, Earl of Leicester.

His spirit was suited to the place. The great, the strong, the beautiful, was his sphere: the great, for his lordly ambition; the strong, for security in his crimes; the beautiful, as applying to his exquisite taste and unbounded munificence. An insatiable curiosity is excited by the character of this mysterious bad man, of whom it was said, with much wit, "that his depth was not fathomable in those days, nor his policy in these." No: with all the lights of history broadly shining on his career, Dudley is still a great historical enigma.

His surname was derived from the Castle of Dudley, one of the oldest fortresses of this island, and was assumed, according to the ancient custom of England, by the younger children of the barons of that place. Proud and commanding as was once that castle, so was the intellect of the race who derived their name from its towers, ancient as the days of Dudo the Saxon, who gave his name to it in the year 700. From this race sprang Edmund Dudley, the lawyer, the statesman, and the tool of Henry VII. He was crafty, able,

and unscrupulous, like his celebrated descendant, but less fortunate. Scarcely had Henry VII. expired than his instrument, with his accomplice Empson, was committed to the Tower, thence never more to emerge, since both of these execrable men perished on the scaffold. His talents, his ambition, but not his misfortunes, descended to his son, John Dudley, Duke of Northumberland; the most powerful subject that this kingdom ever beheld. He resembled his father, however, in more respects than one. After sitting as one of the judges upon his great enemy the Duke of Somerset, and rising to the highest possible *acmé* of power and influence, he thought it not unseemly to oppress his poor cousin, John, Baron of Dudley, whose estates being entangled by usurers, were got, by successful mortgages, into the duke's hands; so that he at last compassed what he had for many years sighed for, the possession of Dudley Castle. This he repaired in a manner worthy of his greatness, adorning it with the arms of his own branch of the family, the quarterings of his mother and her high-born relatives, so that the renovated structure might henceforth appear to belong to his family alone; and the poor rightful baron meantime went by the name of the "Quondam Lord," until, by a turn of fate, the Duke of Northumberland was attainted, and the Castle of Dudley restored to the injured man, the ancestor, be it observed, of the Lords Dudley and Ward.

From this oppressive, haughty, unscrupulous stock sprang Robert Dudley, Earl of Leicester. Who that

looks into history, can help subscribing to Dr. Arnold's belief in hereditary tendencies? Yet there is one contradiction to this theory, in Ambrose, the good Earl of Warwick, brother of the Earl of Leicester. Where he reposes, in the chapel dedicated to Our Ladye at Warwick, — his effigies in armour, with his mantle of an earl lying thereon, his head resting on a mattress cut in marble, his hands conjoined as in prayer; at his feet a bear, all muzzled, painted to the life,—is an inscription placed there by the pious care of his widowed countess, recounting his virtues. It is long; but one short memorial, enough for any man, was inscribed on the hearts of his contemporaries. He was called "the Good Earl of Warwick." Many are the traits related of his noble beneficent spirit. They are scarcely remembered, whilst the dark vices and brilliant career of his brother are known to every English reader.

Little, however, has transpired of Robert Dudley's boyish days, nothing even of the date of his birth: and the first signal event of his life was his marriage to Amy Robsart; no ideal personage, but the actual daughter of a sturdy knight, Sir John Robsart; and, moreover, that union was contracted at the express wish of the Duke of Northumberland, and was celebrated at Shene, the king, Edward VI., honouring the nuptials by his grave but youthful presence. Amy, so bewitchingly pictured by Sir Walter Scott, was a considerable heiress, descended from a Norfolk family; and as it was one of the duke's plans to marry his sons

early, by way of forming a strong family compact in those factious days, we may presume that Amy's family were not to be despised. Noble blood ran in her veins, and two of her ancestors had been Knights of the Garter. And gallant doings were there at this wedding; certain gentlemen, among other sports, striving which should carry away a goose's head that was hanged, the bird being alive, on two cross-posts! And we may reasonably presume that, until deep designs had arisen in the mind of the accomplished young Dudley, the youthful pair may have known felicity, perhaps the only real taste of it that Dudley's finished career of crime permitted. He was, even in that dawn of his influence, a perfect and most elegant courtier, prone to gallantry, and of an imagination easily kindled to love; his temper was complaisant, and he was deadly insidious to those whom he designed to ruin. For the rest, he was lavish to every one who served him—a quality which enhanced his power; and he knew well how to choose his time, how to carry his point; and well did he succeed in some respects, for *this* world was every thing to him, and he stopped at no scruples of honour or humanity.

One word more about Amy Robsart. At the time of his first marriage, Dudley was still only a knight, though after his restoration in blood, he went by the name of Lord Robert Dudley; a title which he bore when the first gleam of light — the possibility of his obtaining the hand of his sovereign in marriage—broke upon him. He was not at that time the owner of

Kenilworth, which Elizabeth did not bestow upon him until 1562. Alas, poor Amy! — or, as some vexatious historians will have it, poor Annie; she died two years previously; and the world was filled, to use an expression of the day, with "the lamentable tragedy of her death."

The story to which Camden, in his "Annals of Queen Elizabeth," refers, stating that the lady fell from a high place, has been but little embellished in its tragical particulars, by the author of "Kenilworth;" but when he makes his heroine repair to that castle, and witness there the festivities which she was forbidden to share, he commits an anachronism, for which we are, nevertheless, greatly obliged to him.

Dudley, it seems, first endeavoured to dispose of Amy by poison. He applied to Dr. Bayley, a professor of physic at Oxford, and a Fellow of New College. That gentleman refused to do his behest, and Dudley endeavoured to displace him. He employed in this affair Sir Richard Varney, who is said, indeed, to have prompted the foul deed, to which the report that Dudley was either a bachelor or a widower gave facility. The lady was enticed to Cumnor Hall, in Berkshire, there to rest under the care of Anthony Forster, who lived in the old manor-house of the place, and whilst she was here their scheme was brought to bear.

Seeing their victim deeply melancholy, "as one," says Aubrey, "who knew by her other handling that her death was not far off," they tried to persuade her to take a potion they had prepared for her. This she re-

fused; and they then sent to Dr. Bayley, at Oxford, and entreated him to persuade her into compliance with their advice; but he, misdoubting them, and dreading lest "he should be hanged afterwards (should the murder be found out), "as a colour to their sin," refused. Then it was necessary to adopt some other plan. Poor doomed one! One day, when still detained in that gloomy old manor-house, all her servants were sent off by Varney and Forster to Abingdon, three miles from Cumnor, Varney remaining alone with her, with one man only. Then the deed of horror was accomplished! The unhappy Amy was first stifled, or strangled, it is not known which; and afterwards the two miscreants flung her down stairs, and "broke her neck, using much violence upon her." A report was set on foot in the neighbourhood, that she had met with this accident by chance, and "still without hurting of her hood that was on her head." But, says Aubrey, "the inhabitants of the place will tell you that she was conveyed from her usual chamber where she lay, to another where the bed's head of her chamber stood close upon a secret postern-door, where they, in the night-time, came and stifled her in her bed, bruised her head very much, and broke her neck, throwing her down stairs."

How the blood freezes in such a recital! Innocence, youth, rank, pleaded not for the wretched Amy in that dark hour, with those murderous tools; and the blow came from the hand that should have protected and saved her.

The miscreants hoped that murder would not out; but a just avenging Providence defeated their schemes. One of the two persons concerned was afterwards convicted of felony. During his imprisonment he related the tale of Amy's death: he was instantly, by the Earl of Leicester's vengeance, made away with, and was found dead in his cell. Varney died miserably in London; and, stung by remorse, was heard, shortly before his death, to say that all the devils in hell were tearing him to pieces! Forster, a person before this event given to mirth and hospitality, pined and drooped away in silent anguish. An inquest sat upon the mangled remains of Amy, and her brother came to Cumnor to investigate her death; but Leicester found means to stop his mouth, and to suppress all inquiries. And a splendid funeral in St. Mary's Church, Oxford, attested his conjugal sorrow. Only one evil accident occurred. The earl's chaplain, one Dr. Babington, in preaching the funeral sermon referred to the lady as being pitifully "murdered;" instead of saying, "pitifully slain." Such is the account of Aubrey. It is said by grave dispassionate reasoners, not to be very consistent, and that the silence of the lady's family tends to prove that the inquisition after her death referred to the disposal of her property; but tradition is ever a safer guide than argument.

The death of Amy removed the obstacle, but did not insure the earl's nuptials with the queen. Honours were, indeed, showered down upon him in abundance, and whatever he desired for himself or his friends was

bestowed upon him as soon as asked. When at Cambridge with the queen, the earl received honours little short of those due to royalty; but still the one boon was withheld—her regal hand. Elizabeth knew no equal, even in her affections. In despair, and prone, notwithstanding all his barbarous conduct to poor Amy, to the tender affections, a marriage took place at this time between Douglas, baroness-dowager of Sheffield, and the fascinating Leicester. The union was, however, kept a secret, and its actual proof has even been doubted. The unfortunate Lady Douglas Howard, Leicester's second wife, was the daughter of Howard, first Baron Effingham. Her first husband, Lord Sheffield, died suddenly of that mysterious complaint to which the slanderous of those times gave the name of "Leicester's rheum;" a term which speaks volumes of his imputed character. This lady was solemnly wedded to Dudley at Esher, in Surrey, as she herself and other witnesses deposed, according to the rites of the Church of England. The ring then placed upon her finger was set with five-pointed diamonds, having a table diamond in the centre; and it had been a gift to the Earl of Leicester from one of the Earls of Pembroke, on condition that he should use it for a wedding-ring, and for no other purpose. The lady and the witnesses were vowed to secrecy, from fear of the queen's displeasure. Soon afterwards the birth of a son appeared likely to cement the union; and Leicester even committed himself so far as to write a letter, in which he thanked God for that event, and subscribed himself,

"Your loving husband, Robert Leicester." A daughter was also the offspring of this marriage. Moreover, Lady Douglas was served in her chamber as a countess, until her lord gave orders that such honours should be omitted, for fear of a disclosure; a circumstance which Scott, with others, has borrowed in relation to Amy Robsart. Notwithstanding these manifest bonds, five years afterwards Leicester married Lettice, Countess of Essex, the death of whose husband, Walter, Earl of Essex, drew down many suspicions on the earl.

Henceforth began a system of persecution towards the ill-fated Lady Douglas Sheffield. That high-spirited woman refused an offer of 700*l.* as a yearly provision. She was then threatened, upon her non-compliance, with never seeing her husband more, nor receiving a single farthing from him, unless she gave up her claims. The unhappy Lady Sheffield soon found that a slow poison was consuming her strength: she too well knew from what source it emanated. Her hair and nails fell off; and to preserve her life, she gave her hand, notwithstanding her previous union with Dudley, to Sir Edward Stafford, the queen's ambassador in France; although she felt and acknowledged that, in so doing, she prejudiced the claims of her children.

Such was the lot of those whom Lord Leicester cursed with his preference. Yet, during all this time, it was his ambition to be esteemed a religious person. Hypocrisy perfected his sins, and left not a single regret to those who would fain believe that such a

being could not combine talents, bounty, accomplishments, with a deep dye of crime.

In the now silent town of Warwick, the gaiety of which has long since been swallowed up in its new and busy neighbour, Leamington, at one extremity of the High Street, apart from the thoroughfare, there stands an ancient hospital erected, in the height of his career, by the proud Earl of Leicester. You enter beneath an humble archway, and a monastic building, round a small quadrangle, recalls you to other times, plants you in another age. A series of conventual-looking apartments, connected together by a rude cloister, contains twelve brethren, the bedesmen of Lord Leicester, whose silver badge, the bear's paw, they still wear, as did the liveried servants of old, on the sleeves of their blue cloth surcoats. The poor brethren were to be chosen, more especially, from those wounded in battle; and in our day several who suffered at Waterloo, claim and find the benefits of that tranquil and comfortable residence, granted to them for life. A master (to be a clergyman) resides at one extremity of the quadrangle, his windows overlooking that pleasant country, from the fertile pastures of which the revenues of the hospital are derived. A corridor, garnished with flowers, runs round the first story of the quadrangle; whilst to the west is a rude but spacious hall, in which James I. rested on his journey from Scotland to England. All is serene; and a chapel, standing on a rock of sandstone, beneath which an arch is formed, crowns the whole with that sanctity which the earl loved — in

public. There is no pulpit, prayers only being permitted; and a goodly sight it is to see these ancient men turn out from their monastic quarters and walk, in sober order, to prayers; the custom of the sixteenth century, its dress, its rules, being strictly observed to this day; and they show you, in the large conventual-looking kitchen of the hospital, a sampler, worked with the arms of the Dudleys, and said, by tradition, to be the handiwork of Amy Robsart. All recalls the saintly charity of olden times, coupled, perhaps, with superstition, but yet providing for the poor and aged in a way they best like—with *homes*.

The earl continued to sin on, and to atone. It was before his third marriage, and ere yet the Earl of Essex had experienced the effects of a "cunning recipe," brought by an Italian surgeon to Lord Leicester, and whilst Lady Sheffield was in close secrecy, and when the memory of Amy had somewhat died away, that Queen Elizabeth visited Kenilworth. Lord Leicester resembled his father in one respect, he wished to render Kenilworth what his father had desired to render Dudley,—"one of the fairest as well as the strongest places in England." The project cost him 60,000*l.*, and required scores of extortions to complete it. Even his gardens were the result of an oppression which nothing but the dread of "Leicester's rheum" could have caused an indignant and groaning public to have tolerated. Forgotten for the time, perhaps, were all private interests; love was forsaken, friendship despised, and ambition, which grasped at

a crown, alone remembered by the remorseless Leicester.

It was in the July of 1575 that Queen Elizabeth, in one of her progresses, visited Warwickshire. Kenilworth Castle was in its height of splendour and beauty; for the portion called the Leicester Buildings was completed. Light and elegant in their architecture, much of them remains; and, on some parts, patches of mortar and of beams and rafters show the extent and height of the dwelling-rooms. Well might old Laneham write of "the rare beauty of bilding that his honour hath advanced: all of the hard quarry-stone; every room so spacious, so well belighted, and so hy roofed within; so seemly too sight by du proportion without; a daytyme, on every side so glittering by glasse; a night, by continuall brightness of candel, fyre, and torchlight, transparent thro the lyghtsome wyndy, as it wear the Egiptian Pharos relucent untoo all the Alexandrian coast."

But the great beauty of the castle consisted in gardens, an acre or more in extent, on the north of the castle; within the castle wall, extending the whole length of it, was raised a terrace of fine grass, sloping its verdant sides to the garden. The garden was adorned after the fashion of the day, with obelisks, spheres, and white bears — the ancient badge of the Earls of Warwick; at each extremity were arbours, "redolent," as Laneham expresses it, by sweet trees and flowers; alleys — some of them covered with grass, others, for a change, with fine sand, not so light or soft

as to distress the lover of those fair promenades with dust, but smooth, firm, and pleasant to walk on as the sands by the sea-shore, — were constructed in four divisions, ornamented at each angle by a pilaster rising pyramidally fifteen feet high, upon which were set orbs of ten inches thick. These pilasters were coated with fine porphyry, thither conveyed at great expense. Such was the garden, and singularly serene and beautiful must it have looked beneath the frowning towers above; whilst, adds the encomiast of the scene, "further also by great cast and cost" (I trust old Laneham will pardon my here altering his spelling), "the sweetness of savour on all sides, made so respirant from the redolent plants and fragrant herbs and flowers, in form, colour, and quantity so deliciously variant; and fruit-trees bedecked with apples, pears, and ripe cherries."

Near the terrace, and adjoining the north wall, stood a large cage, or aviary, twenty feet in height. This fabric was covered over with a wire net; it contained windows, separated by jutting columns, and surmounted by arches. The columns supported a cornice, underneath which every part was beautified by imitations, in painting, of precious stones, great diamonds, sapphires, emeralds, rubies, set in gold, "by skilful head and hand, by toil and pencil, so lively expressed, as it might be great marvel and pleasure to consider how near excellency of art could approach unto perfection of nature."

Then, at intervals, there were holes and caverns cut into the walls, both for warmth and coolness, to roost

the birds at night; a refuge, too, against the weather. It is in one of these grottoes that Sir Walter Scott supposes Amy Robsart to have concealed herself, and to have been surprised therein by Queen Elizabeth. Who can forget that masterly, that exquisite scene? But since, as Laneham remarks, "The silver-sounded lute, without the sweet touch of hands; the glorious cup, without the fresh fragrant wine; or the rich ring with gem, without the fair-featured finger, is nothing, indeed, in his proper use; even so his honour accounted of this mansion, till he had placed there tenants accordingly." He had his aviary, therefore, replenished with birds of every country; one, indeed, then most rare, from Africa; and the ear and the eye were alike rivetted and entranced by gorgeous plumes and soft sounds.

In the midst of the garden stood a fountain of white marble, from the midst of which rose a column set up in the shape of two Atalantæ joined together, back to back, the one looking to the east, the other to the west, with their hands holding a fair bowl, over which played jets of pellucid water, which fell into the basin wherein the column was planted. This being kept always two feet deep in water, was filled with "fair liking" fish, pleasantly playing to and fro; and here the ragged staff, one of the cognizances of the Dudleys, was seen overtopping the column; whilst below were figures of Neptune, armed with his trident, trailed into the deep by his marine horses; on another side was Thetis, in her chariot, drawn by dolphins; then Triton, by his fishes. Here was Proteus, herding his sea-bulls;

there Doris and daughters, solacing the sea and sands. And here was many a pastime, many a practical joke played off, by turning the water over the loiterers in that exquisite scene; a species of frolic which, as Laneham relates, moved the "trees to seem laughing, but the skies to more sport."

Beyond, whilst around you were the soft gales and the delicious coolness of the gushing fountains; whilst strawberries, cherries, and other fruits, not separated from the pleasaunce, by growing there in high perfection, tempted the senses, and the perfumes of the flowers accorded with the melodious notes of the birds beyond; the *penseroso* who paced along that grassy terrace, might see the woods and waters in the park, for both pool and chase were near at hand: there was no monotony in a scene so varied. "At one moment, in one place, at hand, without travail, to have so full fruition of so many God's blessings," did, as the inspired Laneham remarks, render the gardens of Kenilworth, "for etymon of the words, worthy to be called Paradise; and though not so goodly as Paradise for want of the fair rivers, yet better a great deal by the lak of so unhappy a tree." Paradise was, in truth, a name often applied in old times to certain portions of pleasure-grounds; as at Wressel, and Lekinfield, in the East Riding of Yorkshire.

Never had the castle known before, and it has never since displayed, such a perfection of feudal grandeur; nor were its minor claims less great. In air it was, as Laneham observes, "sweet and whole-

some;" it stood on an easy-mounted hill, its front due facing the east; in the diversified ground about it, "sweet springs bursting forth," delighted both sight and sound; and so judiciously were its demesnes "sorted" into arable land, meadow, pasture, wood, and water, that nothing could by the most fastidious taste be desired. The pool or lake on the west, nourished with many springs, teemed with fish, "delicate, great, and fat, and with all kinds of wild-fowl." The lake, "by a rare situation and natural amitie," half surrounded the castle, the western towers of which seemed to stand within its clear waters, encircling the edifice also, on the south, with its two arms, and then stretched itself, as in the form of two legs, a mile or two to the westward. On the south the castle was, therefore, in fact, separated from the park; yet linked to it in one place by a green slope, called even in Warwickshire a brae (or sloping bank next the water), sprinkled with conies, which were suffered more for pleasure than commodity. On the north and west lay the vast chase, stocked with the red-deer and other "stately game;" and beautiful was the pleasure-ground, with "delectable, fresh, umbrageous arbours, seats, and walks," overshadowed by tall, and what seems to us strange, fragrant trees, "so that Diana herself might have deigned there well enough to range for her pastime."

The left arm of the pool northwards was adorned by Lord Leicester with a bridge, connecting the chase with the castle, and affording a beautiful prospect on

it, and over the pleasances and the far-distant country. And not far from this park there was an excellent quarry of building-stone, which was employed, according to tradition, by Kenelph, or Kenelm, in the erection of the castle.

It was in the height of the summer of 1575, that Queen Elizabeth was entertained by Lord Leicester at Itchlington, seven miles from Kenilworth, where the banquet was held under a tent of extraordinary size; and thence, hunting by the way, they came to the castle. It was eight o'clock in the evening when her "highness" reached the park, where she was received by one of the ten Sibyls, who, "comely clad in pall (a long upper mantle) of white silk, pronounced a proper "poesy in English rhyme and metre," the burden of which we spare our readers. Her majesty passed then into the tilt-yard, the remains of which, shaded by the wild hazel and grazed by the stray lambkin, may still be traced near the castle. Here she was addressed by a tall porter, who pretended to a "great pang of impatience" at seeing his territory invaded; yet confessing anon that he found himself pierced at the presence of a personage "so evidently expressing an heroical sovereignty over the whole estate," yielded up his club, his keys of office, and all, and caused his trumpeters to sound from the wall a tune of welcome; and then rang the courts and echoed the bartisans with the tones of those trumpets — "a noble voice," breathed from trumpets formed of silver. The evening star was now glimmering about the castle, and the "moon, resplendent

still, but of an ampler round," must have begun to rise when the gallant procession rode along the tilt-yard into the inner gate next the base-court of the castle; and here a beautiful apparition delighted the queen. Floating upon a moveable island, blazing with torches on the bosom of the lake, came there to greet her majesty the "Lady of the Lake," a personage distinguished in the famous romance called "La Morte d'Arthur." She, too, attended by two nymphs, met the queen with a "fair-penned metre," setting forth the antiquity of the castle, and saying how she had guarded this lake since the days of King Arthur. "We thought," answered Elizabeth, keeping up the characteristics of this splendid charade, "the lake had, indeed, been ours. But do you call it yours, now? Well, we shall commune on it with you hereafter."

Such were some of the ceremonials, too long to rehearse more particularly, with which the queen was welcomed into the now deserted hall and chambers of Kenilworth, and, as she passed from court to court, and from one scene of pageantry to another, pshawms, cornets, flutes, recorders (a wind instrument resembling the clarionet), viols, harps, raised that loud concert in which her spirit so much delighted. One circumstance is remarkable in all these ceremonials, the indirect tribute to literature. No pageant was complete without its poet; a personage who appeared, on this occasion, in a long ceruleous garment, with a side-and-wide sleeve, Venetian-wise drawn up to the elbow; his doublet-sleeves under that, crimson, nothing but silk; a bay

garland on his head, and a scroll in his hand. But, alas! my poor poet, I must fain add, was regarded only as a servant; and his "ceruleous garment" was intended to mark that condition, blue being, in ancient times, the appropriate colour for servants.

The festivities at Kenilworth would fill a volume, if recited; and, indeed, they differed only in splendour from those of which there are so many recitals in this festive reign. Even on Sunday there was little interruption to the jollities of the party. The forenoon was, indeed, occupied in quiet and vacation from work, and in divine service and preaching at the parish church; but the afternoon was occupied in "excellent music," and in dancing "of lords and ladies," and of "other worshipful degrees," uttered with such lively agility and commendable grace, "as shewed that this day served as well for diversion as any other." On Monday, however, the castle was all in motion; and late in the afternoon, for the day was hot, the woods rang with the blast of the huntsman's horn, the halloos of the huntsmen resounding from the echoes of wood and vale; and her majesty rode forth to see the sport and to join it.

Soon was the hart discovered — soon chased by the hot pursuit of the hounds, until it "took soil," or, to explain that term, plunged into the water, swimming, —his head carried in stately fashion, like the sail of a ship, the hounds pursuing him as if they were a number of skiffs sailing to despoil a carvel or galley; but

at last the hart was killed, yet still the sport ceased not.

It was resumed in the form of a pageant by torchlight, in the woods, at night, when a personage entitled Hombre Salvagio, held a long discourse with Echo; the particulars of which delighted old Gascoigne, who has preserved them, more than they do me. Afterwards, the delicious evenings were solaced sometimes by a gentle stroll, the queen preferring that over the bridge into the chase, whilst a decorated barge filled with musicians sailed along the shores of the lake,—the echoes of the wind-instruments reverberating from the stern masses of the keep—Cæsar's grim tower. Yet were not all her enjoyments so gentle. One day, thirteen bears were tied up in the outer court, to be baited with bear dogs, a variety of the mastiff, having somewhat of the hound's scent—their bite was dangerous, if not mortal; and deep and hollow their bark was heard in the minor court, where, longing for blood, they lay expecting their murderous joys. A natural antipathy existed between this now extinct race of dogs and the bear; "and many a torn coat," observes Laneham, "and many a maimed member (God wot) and bloody face hath the quarrel cost between them." It was thought, however, very pleasant sport to see these beasts, to behold the bear peering after his enemy's approach, to witness the nimbleness of the dog, and his expertness in seizing his advantage, to wonder at the strength and experience of the bear in avoiding his assaults. "If he was bitten in one place how he

would pinch in another to get free; if he were taken once, then what shift, what biting, with clawing, with roaring, tossing, and tumbling he would work to wind himself from them. It was," says the chronicler, adding some particulars as to the bear shaking the blood from his ears, a matter of "goodly relief."

The calm nights were solaced with fireworks, mounting high in the still air above, or burning unquenchably in the waters beneath — "contrary to fire's kinde;" and peals of guns were mingled with shouts of delight, and the meeker voices of the fair. Then an Italian tumbler charmed the queen with his mountebank tricks; and the week came round again to Sunday, when a "fruitful" sermon at the church was followed by a solemn Bride-ale, the procession of which, a suitable couple to marry having been selected, took place in the tilt-yard. It were long to tell all the ceremonials of this gay occasion, honoured, although it were Sunday, by a "comely quintain."

For nineteen days a repetition of these costly and elaborate pleasures went on; and, that time might not be marked nor heeded during this revelling, the following delicate compliment was paid to her majesty: — Upon the top of Cæsar's Tower, near the battlements, there were two dials, the one facing the east, the other the south, thus placed that they might show the hours both to town and country; both faces large, having gold letters on a blue, or as old Laneham calls it, "bice ground." These, during the whole of Elizabeth's sojourn at the castle, were silent, "sang not a note."

"But mark," says the solemn and superstitious Laneham, "whether it were by chance, by constellation of stars, or by fatal appointment (if fates and stars," he adds, with simplicity, "do deal with dials), thus was it indeed." The hands of both the tables stood firm and fast, always pointing to two o'clock, in which Laneham saw a deep and mystical meaning, finding in it, among other imbecilities peculiar to himself, "a type of my Lord Leicester's good heart, frank and friendly to all estates;" which, indeed, was about as remote a conviction as man could come to. One word more, however, touching these mysterious dials, the marks of which, on Cæsar's Tower, may be distinguished at the present day. They were enamelled, and with the sun's beams upon them must have, indeed, been splendid; and their colour, bice, was given to them by a preparation from an Armenian stone, now found in the silver mines of Germany, known to us moderns under the name of smalt. So complete in every point were the splendours of Leicester Castle. It wanted nothing except virtue in its great owner; nothing but humanity and honour, of which he had not a grain; nothing but religion, to which he made such audacious pretensions, to render it, indeed, a paradise.

Its splendours were not without one chronicler or more. Two persons have commemorated the celebrated festivities held during one of Elizabeth's progresses at Kenilworth; these were, Robert Laneham and George Gascoigne. Laneham is remarkably like Pepys. I say is, for such men never die; they are

always our company, they live in our every-day thoughts, they are not set apart as heroes are, they are a portion of our own selves. Laneham was a mercer, or merchant, and served his time in the city of London. He travelled, however, on account of his business, and picked up some accomplishments, which he takes care in his narrative to point out to the attention of society. He danced, he played on the guitar, cittern, and virginal; he was a gallant with the ladies, a *bon vivant* with the men; and was wont to "be jolly and dry in the morning." In short, Mr. Laneham was not the very steadiest of men in the world, or probably he would not have been so pleasant a writer. He was bookish, also; and altogether his acquirements gained him a place in Lord Leicester's favour, and he was made through his interest clerk of the council-chamber door, and keeper of the same; and a properer gossip never held that office. "When the council sit," this is his own description of his duties, "I am at hand; if any make a babbling — Peace! say I; if I take a listener in the chinks or well-hole, I am by-and-by at the bones of him; if a friend come, I make him sit down by me on a form or chest: let the rest walk, a God's name!"

Of far higher consideration was George Gascoigne, author of "The Princely Pleasures of Kenilworth." This was a sort of poetical programme of all "verses, proses, or poetical inventions that were to be presented there, before the queen's majesty." Gascoigne accompanied the queen in all her progresses. He was not only

a poet, but a singer and actor, and recited some of the inventions which he penned.

The career of Leicester, prosperous as it seemed, was not, however, devoid of many pungent mortifications and anxieties. His wife, Lady Lettice, whose beauty had captivated his heart, retained, indeed, her empire over his affections until the last moment of his existence; but she was cousin to the queen, whose jealousy might be excited by these new bonds. Long and sedulously were they, therefore, concealed; nor was it until her son, the Earl of Essex, had attained his well-known place in the queen's affections, that she was permitted to return to court. Nor would the queen meet her, even at the houses of any of her courtiers. "On Shrove Tuesday," writes Rowland Whyte, "the queen was persuaded to go to Mr. Comptroller's, and there was my Lady Leicester, with a fair jewel of 300*l.* A great dinner was prepared by my Lady Shandos, and the queen's coach ready, when, on a sudden, she resolved not to go, and so sent word." Then in the decline of his favour, and when the young rival in his affections, Sir Walter Raleigh, was supplanting him, when Leicester was banished in an honourable and civil way to Flanders, where he had the command of a considerable military force, he had by this time, in 1584, openly acknowledged his Countess Lettice; and he sent for her there that he might hold a court with regal splendour. The countess was, however, forbidden to leave England, and Elizabeth's anger knew no bounds. "I will let the upstart know," such were her

words, "how easily the hand which has exalted him can beat him down to the dust." After a time, however, her "choler," to use an expression of the times, abated. "The queen is on very good terms with you," writes Sir Walter Raleigh to the earl; "and, thanks be God, well pacified, and you are again 'her sweet Robin.'" But no prosperity could soften the malignity of Leicester's disposition where his interests or his ambition were at stake; and *not* the lightest stain upon his memory is his enmity to Mary, Queen of Scots, prompted by a desire that the posterity of the Earl of Huntingdon, who had married his sister, should, from their descent from George, Duke of Clarence, be included in the succession to the crown.

His name was a word of fear, a term implying remorseless revenge, — the arrow that flieth by night, the bowl, or the dagger, as might best suit his lordly convenience. At length, disgust at his vices, dread of his crimes, and that desire of exposing wickedness which is natural to man, broke out in a production entitled "Leicester's Commonwealth." It was written beyond seas, or at least published abroad; and its design was to represent the earl as one who wished to subvert the government, and to substitute a Leicestrian commonwealth. In this composition, which was imported in great numbers, Leicester was represented to be an atheist, and a monster of ambition and cruelty. It was soon dispersed over the country, and obtained the popular title of "Father Parsons' Green Coat," — the leaves being edged with green, and Father Parsons

conjectured to be the author. So great was the sensation which it excited, that the queen issued letters from the privy council, declaring that all its allegations were false; and Sir Philip Sidney, the amiable and accomplished nephew of Lord Leicester, composed an answer, which was never published. To this day the author of the work has never been discovered, but it is supposed to have been one of the Popish writers, who was irritated by the earl's now imputed patronage of the Puritans. The reputation of Leicester stood even this shock, and survived also his campaign, and his manifest inefficiency in the Low Countries. The first in the tournament, Leicester was not blessed with the high capacity essential for a general. Yet he was made lieutenant-general — his sovereign alone his superior — when the Spanish Armada threatened the British shores.

But the career of Leicester was now at a close, and the threads of his destiny were cut short suddenly. Whether by disease, or by that retributive justice which doomed the secret assassin to fall by his own potions, by the poison which he had prepared for others, history has not decided. His death, however, took place at his own house, Cornbury, in Oxfordshire, whither he retreated in disgust with the court, and tired of the world, which he had loved not wisely but too well, with the intention of proceeding to Kenilworth. Suddenly, if not fearfully, did he expire. On the 27th of August, 1588, he was well, and wrote to Lord Burleigh that he should soon return to court,

adding his apologies for leaving London without seeing him. On the 4th of September he breathed his last. This fact discountenances the statement of Camden, that he died of a fever, since his illness would have been, in all probability, more lingering. The public impression was, that he died in consequence of taking a poison prepared for others, he being, in the preparation of such deadly doses, a rare artist. Such is the impression of Naunton; and the privy council taking up the matter, examined at some length a man named Crofts, who was suspected of the deed, but no conclusion was arrived at. He died, however, consistently as he had lived, for his existence was one great piece of acting. His will, written whilst he was in Flanders, is framed with consummate art: that whilst he appears to consider mainly his wife's interests, he leaves the bulk of his fortune to his son, Robert Dudley, the offspring of Lady Sheffield; and, happily for Sir Robert Dudley, Ambrose, the good Earl of Warwick was still alive; so that through his interest the will was carried into effect.

In the chapel of Our Ladye, at Warwick, repose the mouldering bones of Robert Dudley, Earl of Leicester, with his earl's coronet on his head, and his countess's effigies lying beside him. A more detested, yet a more powerful subject, has rarely served a British monarch. His religious zeal, by which he misled persons of weak judgment, never regulated his passions, nor soared above his temporal interests. Professing the utmost piety, he may, therefore, morally, be denied the title to

Christianity. Yet there is something bold in his career, and captivating to the imagination in his fearless vices. Great as a politician, he "never chose a back game;" his imperious nature could not brook the duplicity which it required. He sought, and admired men of ability; but he kept them away from court, in stations "where they might be useful to him and he to them." The generous patronage of talent, from a pure appreciation of merit, was unknown to him.

The plaything of fortune, Robert Dudley, the son of Lady Sheffield, succeeded his father as the Lord of Kenilworth. The Lady Lettice, his father's widow, notwithstanding her devotion to the memory of the last earl, became through life the bitter enemy of his son. One word more about this Lady Lettice, be-praised in those beautiful lines by Sir Gervace Clifton, beginning, —

> "There you may see that face, that hand,
> Which once was fairest in the land;
> She that in her younger years
> Matched with two great English peers,
> She that did supply the wars
> With thunder, and the court with stars."

Lady Lettice appears, nevertheless, to have been a lady of questionable virtue, at least in her youth. She lived to see her noble son, the Earl of Essex, perish on the scaffold; and having committed the folly of marrying a third husband, Sir Charles Blount, she saw him perish also in the same way. Then she retired, a re-

claimed and chastened mourner, to expiate her early delinquencies by goodwill to man and piety to God:—

"Whose gold thread, when she saw spun,
And the death of her brave son,
Thought it safest to retire
From all care, and vain desire,
To a private country cell,
Where she spent her days so well,
That to her the better sort
Came as to our holy court;
And the poor that livèd near,
Death nor famine would not fear."

Her stepson succeeded to his father's possessions, but not to his titles, when he was fifteen. The earl had always kept him in obscurity, chiefly, it is said, in the hope of bringing him one day forward as his son by Queen Elizabeth. And well might he be proud of this fine, ill-fated youth, who, as he shone forth the proprietor of Kenilworth, was looked upon as one of the finest gentlemen in England; tall, well-proportioned, and handsome, though red-haired, learned beyond his years, an adept in mathematics, endowed with a frank and generous nature, and with a spirit of enterprise. Such was Robert Dudley. His youth was passed in voyages of discovery, for which he had a passion, and in an ill-starred attempt to prove his legitimacy. But the rancour of his mother-in-law frustrated his hopes. The corrupt times of James I. had now arrived, and the sources of justice were corrupted. The process which young Dudley set on foot was suddenly closed, the examinations locked up. Broken-hearted, Sir Robert

requested a license from King James to quit England for three years. Abroad, the titles of Earl of Warwick and Duke of Northumberland were accorded to him; and he sighed for that recognition due to his birth. He had by this time connected himself with the family of Leigh, his neighbours at Stoneleigh Abbey, by a marriage with the Lady Alice Leigh. He left his lady at Kenilworth, probably hoping some day to return thither, and again to head those halls with an earl's dignity. He never, however, revisited his native country, but died at Florence, having been first created, by the Emperor Ferdinand, a grand duke of the empire. His true celebrity consisted, however, in his great projects for draining the marshes near Pisa, and raising Leghorn from an insignificant place into a commercial town, by the erection of a haven, and other improvements. His schemes, among which one for the improvement of our revenue was submitted to James I., were those of a benevolent as well as of an able man. He had all the talents of the Dudleys, without their vices. His narratives of his voyages are preserved in Hakluyt's collection; and his work on increasing the revenue established his reputation as a man of great abilities. His standard production was a book, now extremely rare, "Del Arcano del Mare," in two folio volumes, full of schemes, charts, plans, and replete with knowledge, especially in mathematical science. This work, which is chiefly intended for the promotion of navigation, and the extension of commerce, has been styled "*a singular treasury* of curious and important

schemes." Whilst thus devoting himself to the pursuit of science, Sir Robert Dudley received intelligence from home, which must have tended greatly to dispel all lingering wishes ever to return there. We have already seen how his claim to the earldom of Leicester was disposed of; his scheme for improving the revenue was judged pernicious, and tended to hasten, rather than to retard his exile. In his castle he left his wife, Lady Alice, and four infant daughters; but though they resided at Kenilworth, the place, by the statute of fugitives, was forfeited to the crown, upon the flight of Sir Robert. No steps were taken respecting it, however, until Henry, Prince of Wales, was advertised of its provincial fame, and was imbued with the notion of its being indeed a royal residence. It was then surveyed; and, from the account of it, it must, indeed, have been magnificent — too much so, indeed, to escape kingly cupidity. The circuit of the castle within the walls comprised an extent of seven acres; and the walks on the walls were so wide, that two or three persons could walk abreast on them. The rooms of great state were built with as much uniformity as any of later time; and the cellars were erected upon arches of freestone. The chase, called the King's Wood, formerly stocked with deer, had at this period been suffered to fall into neglect—the deer had strayed; and the Countess Lettice (shame on her saintly reputation!) had cut down much of the timber, which was hers by will; yet still it was valued at 20,000*l.*, and it was said, was in "a convenient state for removal."

Alas! one by one, one beholds, as in a vision, the glories of Kenilworth departing, in gloomy procession. "There runneth through the said grounds," the survey goes on to state, "by the walls of the castle, a fair pool, containing cxi acres, well stored with fish and fowl, which, at pleasure, is let round about the castle." It makes one sigh to hear of it — no pool is there now — all filled up, dried up, let off, long ago; the eye rests upon a green, fair country, with a marvellous lack of water, for the blessed Avon is miles off. With a sigh I write on. "The circuit of the castle, mannours, parks, and chase, lying round together, contains at least xix or xx miles in a pleasant country; the like, both for state, strength, and pleasure, not being within the realm of England."

Alack the day! 14,500*l.* were paid for it; and it became the property of Prince Henry, descending after his death to Charles I., who succoured the widow and orphans of its former possessor, bestowing on the Lady Alice, during the civil wars, the title of Duchess of Dudley during the term of her natural life. Sir Robert died at Florence; and as far as any connection with Kenilworth was concerned, his race with him: they were extinct to that still lordly demesne and stately castle.

Dugdale leaves its history unfinished; but what matters it? 'Tis but to repeat the oft-told tale, — it was ruined by the civil wars.

"It was not in the battle,
No tempest gave the shock;"

No, it was by a mean, vulgar-minded, stupid, round-headed, puritanical neglect and indifference, as well as by a dirty rapacity, that this grand edifice, visited by the Plantagenets, by the Tudors, by the Stuarts, owned by lofty barons and loved by gentle dames, fell into decay. Cromwell gave it away to his officers, who pillaged, dismantled, and then left it. At last he stopped the depredations, and left to Time to do the rest.

It *has* done all that the most sagacious utilitarian could desire. It has shaken her battlements, crumbled her topless turrets, choked up her lake, broken down her walls. Year after year the ivy grows, and, clothing, destroys what it covers. Year after year visitants carry away relics, or leave fragments of vile repasts, indecently held here; for I call it indecent to profane so grand and melancholy a scene with rude revelry. Year after year one part or another becomes unsafe; and the limits of the building are now scarcely traceable. And yet it is, and has been, for many years, the property of a time-honoured, a lettered, a virtuous, and therefore, of course, castle-loving race, who bear the lofty title of one who must ofttimes have paced in those once jocund halls—Clarendon.

CHAP. IX.

THE SIEGE OF RAGLAND CASTLE, AND THE SOMERSET FAMILY.

My imagination was, at an early period of my life, haunted by visions of what Kenilworth and other places which had been ravaged by foes, must have been in earlier days, when the complement of each garrison was complete, the warden in all his power, the towers well watched and faithfully defended; when the great halls were as full of guests as they now are of rats, swallows, and bats; when there were matins and even song in the long-ruined chapels; when fair damsels leaned over the battlements of turrets, and walked in all state and security on the terraces below.

I became a ruin fancier; to each his favourite pursuit, to each his taste. My chief pursuit was, for a long time, groping amid decay—my taste was devastation. I revelled in broken arches, and overgrown courts; of course, each day I grew more and more in love with the valour that defended, and more and more indignant against that which assailed, the noblest structures in England; and so, from Kenilworth, I took a gig, and went on through Worcester, and then down the Wye to Ragland—feeding my appetite for ruins,

and increasing my rage against republicans by a glimpse at Goodrich, and a long, long summer's day spent at Chepstow.

Thence went I on to Ragland Castle. I like it better by its old name of "Raglan;" for thus Charles I. spoke it, and his very trusty servant, Henry Somerset, first Marquess of Worcester, spelt it. "From my poor house of Raglan," "from my poor castle of Raglan," his letters are dated.*

This "poor house of Raglan" was one of the most glorious of those great seats of which we have but a vestige—yet let us not forestall events—one of the many which we never sorrow for so much as when we view, *in propriâ personâ*, the ravages which have befallen them.

I well remember standing before the majestic towers of Ragland shortly before nightfall. It was a fine summer's evening; and the harp which a blind minstrel had caused to echo through the ruined courts of the mouldering ruins for the diversion of a party of pleasure, who had just mounted their horses and departed, had rung out its last chords. The ivy-mantled structure was left to silence, to the owls, and to me; when just as, becoming awe-struck with the death-like repose, I too was going away, a white object, gentle in its movements, agile, noiseless, came forth from the gloom and stood upon the ramparts. By the spirit of the great Strongbow, which I make no doubt really

* The present Lord Raglan, has, I observe, restored the name to its original spelling.

haunts this spot, I thought it was some apparition of one of the ancient Somersets — a young lady, of course — murdered in yon vault, or dying broken-hearted in yonder turret; and I clasped my hands together and looked up in solemn wonderment. To what? To a poor little white goat, which now, as if in mockery of my fears, began browsing on the dry tufts of grass between the neglected battlements!

And, indeed, I can suppose white robes may have flaunted on those very battlements ere yet they shook before the cannon of the besieging host; when some of the bravest spirits in England gave up the ghost, and blood was shed that not all the tears in Christendom could atone for. To look for disinterested valour, to look for honour and that high romance which was then called loyalty, to look for faith without bigotry, and intrepidity coupled with humanity, we must search out the old annals of the house of Somerset, and fall in love, as we are sure to do, with Henry, Marquess of Worcester, the father of him who wrote the "Century of Inventions."

It is curious enough that this family has changed its proper name, and derived its more modern appellation from its first title. John of Gaunt, Duke of Lancaster, ordained that every one of his natural children by Catherine Swynford should be called Beaufort, from the place of their birth in Anjou. Sir John Beaufort, in 1306, was created Earl of Somerset; and hence the name connected with illegitimacy was abandoned, and the more honourable appellation, as it might be termed,

of Somerset, was assumed. However, upon the elevation of the family to ducal rank, the surname of Beaufort was revived in the present title; and a proud family were they from the beginning, for their Plantagenet ancestor had his Beaufort children legitimatised; and in the patent of legitimacy, either by oversight or intention, the exclusion from inheritance to the crown was not inserted, until, on the patent being ratified many years afterwards by Henry IV., the important words *excepta dignitate regni* were introduced. But these three significant words could not efface from the blood of the Beauforts the qualities of the great Plantagenets. The natural endowments of the Edwards shone forth even when the race was so far modernised as to become Somersets. They were able in politics, energetic in the field, polite in the court, and in one of their descendants, in the noble and valiant Henry, first Marquess of Worcester, the Plantagenet constitution also appeared. But of this hereafter.

"The beautiful and castle-like seat" of Ragland, as Camden calls it, is, however, by no means a very ancient possession of this family. Dugdale tells us that the great race of Clare owned, and that Richard Strongbow, the last of that line, gave the castle, in the time of Henry II., to Walter Bloet, whence it came into the family of Berkley, and thence to the Somersets. But of this there is some doubt; and, indeed, the Herbert family are said to have been the intermediate race through which this proud fortress passed to the Somersets. However that might be, it is impossible for a

family to have been more completely suited to Ragland than were the Beaufort-Somersets, or Somerset-Beauforts; or any castle to have been better adapted to its inhabitants than was this "my poor house of Raglan" to them.

Good old man! for it is impossible to think of Henry, Marquess of Worcester, as ever having been young,—that stout hero whom parliamentarian decree made to languish in what he cheerfully called his castle in the Tower. Yet was not Henry Somerset always the object of reverence solely. The time was when a gayer gallant, a more *preux chevalier*, graced not the House of Lords, when, in the lifetime of his father, he was called up to parliament as a peer. He was then a young man of almost gigantic stature, of a portly yet active frame, with handsome Beaufort-like features, royal and aquiline. He was very sumptuous in his attire, and grand in his demeanour; yet indulged, not rarely, in an honest jest or two, for he had a vein of humour which was never extinguished until he laid his head in the tomb. In his sense of honour he was a true representative of the age of chivalry, which may be said to have lasted in England until the reign of Charles II. With all his grandeur of soul, the marquess combined strong common sense, a practised judgment, a philosophic view of public affairs, and a dauntless sincerity. His admonition to Charles I., when that monarch assisted at the trial of Sir Trevor Williams, a rebel at Abergavenny, is full of piquancy. The king, moved by the tears and entreaties of the baronet, for-

gave him and his companions certain acts of treachery and disloyalty; a merciful, but an ill-timed line of conduct. Charles had himself presided on the bench. He turned to the marquess and apologised for his lenity.

"Your majesty," said the venerable nobleman, for this was in the latter part of his career, "may chance to gain the kingdom of God by such doings as these; but if ever you get the kingdom of earth by such ways, I will be your bondman."

This was but one instance of the marquess's plain speaking, and Charles seems to have listened to him as to a mentor. But ere I describe their familiar intercourse, let me present a picture of the scene in which those conversations, which have been thought worthy of being immortalised under the name of "Witty Apophthegms" between James I., Charles I., and the Marquess of Worcester, were, in days of yore, listened to with profound attention or with lively fear by surrounding courtiers, as the case might be: as for fear, the marquess himself was wholly unconscious of that sentiment; his motto seemed written on his brow, "I scorn either to change or fear," and neither did he; no, though that aged and wasting form was destined to sink away in a prison.

Once seen afar through a country comparatively level, rose the great citadel of Ragland,—the Great Tower of Gwent; or, as it is sometimes called, the Yellow Tower of Gwent. Five stories, seated on a gentle eminence, a mile from the straggling village of Ragland, composed this proud keep. It is connected

with the castle by a drawbridge; its walls are ten feet thick, defended by bastions. I say are, for much of the Yellow Tower of Gwent, the pride of Monmouthshire, remains. Around this citadel extend raised terraces, whereon—it is traditional, but so highly probable that it almost becomes fact—the pensive Charles was wont to linger, calling this his favourite walk, during those few weeks when he last enjoyed the state and service due to a king. The niches of the walls of these terraces were garnished with statues of the Roman emperors; and as the flag waved from the summit of the citadel, as the body-guards presented arms to the monarch, as Henry Somerset walked beside him, clad in his velvets and sables, this might truly seem a walk fit for a king. Or yet—for I love to draw a picture of those eventful times—fancy the monarch riding in at the grand entrance, a magnificent portal with a pointed arch above, with two hexagonal towers, one on each hand, which still stand there, although princes and warriors ride in no more. One of them the ivy now shrouds; and the loop-holes, through which missiles were hurled at an approaching enemy, are well-matted over with birds'-nests. Here entered Charles, here dangled his love-locks to the winds. Here his mild glance rested on the splendours or the strength of the place, and, perhaps, calculated how long "that would hold out."

A third tower adds to the stateliness of this entrance; and the portcullis being drawn up, and the seneschal having given assent, you ride into the first court. This was once paved: afterwards the briar and the

grass grew there unheeded; and above, on the southern side, are the ruined ranges of grand apartments: on the eastern and northern were the domestic and useful departments.

The hall, erected in the days when the Somersets prospered—those of Elizabeth, is still so nearly entire that some idea was entertained, not many years back, of entirely restoring it. Like Westminster Hall, its roof was of Irish oak; above which was a dome, whence partly it was lighted. The large open chimney seems to disclose a thousand pictures of former days; and you may group around its dark precincts men and arms, and courtly damsels, statesmen and priests; the king, perchance, himself over his steadfast game of chess; or the crafty Glamorgan. Of that subtle politician and deep-dyed bigot, more anon.

Above the fire-place are still seen the arms of the Somersets, presenting a sort of comment on the sublunary nature of all worldly greatness; telling that in yon proud hall, of all the energies of their power, this the least important, this the mere external attribute alone remains.

Another fair court, called the large court, extends beyond the hall, and curious is the fretwork of its walls, and beautiful the tracery of the windows of those apartments which surround the large court.

I well remember how, in the coming shadows of evening, I felt the silence of that vast and desolate hall. Our footsteps alone rang upon its stone floor, our voices alone echoed in its dark corners; yet if I

were awe-struck by the gloom of what had once been the scene of the banquet, by the dim loftiness of the roof, once resounding to the loud carousal, or to the sweeter sounds of the native harp, how much more striking and solemn was the utter desecration, the partial disclosure, the total stillness of the next scene to which my guide conducted me!

We passed through a western door into what had once been a chapel. The groins, which rise from grotesque heads, alone render this sacred apartment traceable. Yet here Charles prayed. Yes, here; for although the marquess and his family were Roman Catholics, ample toleration was given to those of the reformed faith, and the service was performed alternately. Here, whilst yet full of hope — though his affairs were fast failing — the monarch uttered those aspirations, for the welfare of others, which came from a chastened heart.

I pictured to myself the king at his devotions, calm, steadfast, as when the loss of Bristol was disclosed to him, when he finished out the whole service without making a comment or asking a question until that, his main concern in life, was completed. Then I followed him, in thought, as we passed through the other various compartments of this vast building. These are all on a grand scale — on a Plantagenet scale — the rooms are of huge dimensions; the stone frames to the lofty windows are decorated with friezes and mouldings, which show how finished was the taste of every subordinate compartment.

I have omitted to mention two rude whole-length figures in stone at the upper end of the chapel; these are the only attempts at sculpture which remain, as far as I remember, in the interior.

I have spoken of the large court beyond the hall. It is, and probably was, commonly called the Fountain Court; and the scene which it now presents, ruined as it is, is of exquisite beauty. When Henry Somerset repaired his "poor house at Raglan," a fountain, ornamented with the statue of a white horse, graced the centre of this noble court: around were the strong buildings which accommodated the garrison; for this castle combines the domestic and the military character, unlike its sister of Chepstow, which has but little of the former attribute, but seems to have been intended solely as a fortress. But in Ragland the butteries, the cellars, the chimneys, all denote one uniform scale of princely grandeur, extending even to the lowest departments of this vast household. Great were its proportions, great its fall; decay has done much, but cupidity did more: for twenty-three staircases were taken away from the castle after the besiegers had left it to the owls and bats—a mark for rampant disloyalty to point at.

What the furniture (the appointments, as it is now the fashion to call them) of this grand abode must have been, it is not easy to conceive. The interior of Ham House presents a specimen of the period of James I., but all at Ragland must have been on a grander scale. The times were luxurious. Even in

the ruder and humbler abodes of English country gentlemen or of knights, "great provision of Turkie work," as Harrison calls it, and costly cupboards of plate worth *5000l.* or *6000l.*, were ofttimes to be seen. What, then, was the magnificence of Ragland like unto? Alas! it has all perished, and we can only imagine its splendours. Even in Elizabeth's time, windows of crystal, and tapestry of gold and silver were to be met with. When the queen gave audience to foreign ambassadors in her bed-chamber, her cushions were adorned with gold and silver, her bed-quilts lined with ermine: —

> "Her bed-chamber was hanged
> With tapestry of silk and silver; the story,
> Proud Cleopatra when she met her Roman."

Such is Imogen's chamber in "Cymbeline." The sleeping-rooms of Ragland fell not, probably, short even of kingly splendour; whilst over the chamber-doors mottoes were placed for the instruction of servants, or the admonition of visitors. As were the bed-chambers fitted up with arras, so were the parlours, though more frequently with carving in oak; whilst round about, were strewed sweet herbs, and nosegays intermingled with fragrant flowers, delicious to the senses.

Fancy Charles I. in this delightful, safe, and princely house of Ragland; see him going forth from the banqueting-hall or the gallery to his bed-chamber, followed by his faithful servant, Sir Thomas Herbert. The torch-bearers walk before him, and he proceeds to

his vaulted chamber, wherein are two beds; the one for the master, the other, a truckle bed, for his page. A little silver bell is placed on a table at the king's right hand, with which he arouses his attendant at his pleasure. A watch-light, divided into time by marks, stands in a silver bason within the chamber. His two watches were laid on a stool near. Sir Thomas Herbert sleeps in an ante-chamber. And thus, after long prayers, the monarch reposes.

But, as I paced the courts and peeped into each deserted corner, nothing struck me more than the great extent and depth of the subterranean chambers, the dismal, the unutterably dismal dungeons and cellars. The former are distinguishable by having no entrance, as far as I could see, except a slanting side, through which a prisoner was pushed down by force, and up which no human power could raise itself. One of these yawns to the full glare of day, but the eye cannot penetrate its depth. What volumes of sorrow those strong walls must have heard! and which they only have heard, for no ear could catch the sounds of that solitary despair; no ear of earth, no eye of mortal, could penetrate that unfathomable gloom. The eye of Omniscience could alone discern the sorrow-stricken captive, and the ear of a pitying Father alone receive his plaint. The vaults lie chiefly under the hall—those, at least, now explorable, for the subterranean chambers beneath the ruined towers cannot be visited with safety: at all events, I saw them not. In the gloom of that soft evening how had I dared to attempt them!

And here, in more than baronial splendour, lived Henry Somerset. The demesne around the castle corresponded in character to the proud towers which surveyed them. Superb gardens and pleasure grounds lay at their feet, and the approach to the castle passed through a noble avenue of elms. Well-conditioned dairy-farms, fat pastures, lay near, around Landeny. An extensive forest of oak and beech composed the home-park. Well might the poet write of Ragland:—

"A famous castle free,
That Raggland hight, stands moted almost round;
Made of freestone, upright, as straight as line.
Whose workmanship in beautie dothe abounde;
The curious knots, wrought all with edged tools,
The stately towre, that looks over pond and poole;
The fountain trim that runs both day and nighte,
Doth yield in show a rare and noble sighte."

Thus doth old Churchyard, of melancholy name, commemorate the scene. The neighbourhood of Ragland, be it certified, is less mountainous than most parts of Monmouthshire. It is watered by fewer streams than most districts of that fine county. There is a sameness in its scenery; but it is a fine and fertile district, diversified by gentle acclivities and by fair valleys.

And from the castle were sent forth troops which were stationed in different parts of the county, and which secured Monmouthshire so long to the Royalists that it was the last county that fell to the Parliamentarians. Eight hundred men did the marquess main-

tain, appoint, and discipline at his own expense. Was he blessed in his family? What were his domestic relations? Were his children dutiful? Was his lady worthy of being his wife? She came, at all events, of a noble race; for her mother was one of the daughters of Sir Anthony Cooke, grafted on the stock of Russell. This lady, we find, had taken possession of Donnington Castle, said to have been the seat of Chaucer; but, during one of her visits to her daughter in Wales, it was wrested from her by Charles, Earl of Nottingham, who claimed to be its rightful owner.

Anne Russell, Marchioness of Worcester, presented to her lord a hopeful son, as far as talents were concerned, in their heir, Edward Somerset, afterwards Earl of Glamorgan, for so was he created by Charles I. As he grew up, a character of strangely opposite qualities was disclosed — bigotry, commingled with a love of philosophical speculations, which seemed wholly at variance. Henry, Marquess of Worcester, was a convert to the Church of Rome. His son's extravagant zeal may, therefore, be accounted for; for it is the new, and not the old Romanists, who run into extremes. But Glamorgan was, as Lord Clarendon observes, "of that sort of Romanists the people rendered them odious, by accusing them to be the most jesuited." However that might be, Lord Glamorgan soon rose into favour at court, where, as Horace Walpole would have us believe, his bigotry was "no disrecommendation." He was enterprising and enthusiastic; and Charles, struck by his talents and address, made one fatal mistake — he

trusted him. The earl was sent over to Ireland, and, as the enemies of Charles allege, with a commission signed by Charles to bring over a large body of the Irish Catholics to his service. The treaty was discovered, and Glamorgan was imprisoned by the Irish government until the royal pleasure concerning him should be known. Parliament complained, and the king disavowed the commission; yet whilst he did so he renewed his confidence in the earl, who never resented his sovereign's disavowal, which he attributed to the necessity of his affairs.

Whether Charles was really privy to Glamorgan's transactions has never been distinctly proved. His majesty's advocates admitted that he had delivered blank warrants to the earl; and Charles's letters are said to have authorised every latitude which Glamorgan could take. Thus stands the question, which people will settle according to their own predilection, as, in the absence of evidence, they are wont to do. If I may presume to say so, I think with Horace Walpole: "With the king's enemies," says that shrewd and worldly man, "I cannot but believe that he commissioned the earl to fetch Irish forces; with his favourers, I cannot think him so much to blame if he did." "It requires very primitive resignation in a monarch to sacrifice his crown and his life, when persecuted by subjects of his own sect, rather than preserve both by the assistance of others of his subjects who differed from him in ceremonials or articles of faith." Like the Empress Maria Theresa, when she accepted the aid

of England, Charles might have excused himself with the exclamation, "*Ce sont de braves impies.*" His fault was not, as Horace Walpole cleverly observes, "in proposing to bring over the Irish, but in having made them necessary to his affairs."

There is no doubt, however, that the disposition which Charles displayed, through Glamorgan, to the toleration of the Catholics, contributed greatly to his impending ruin. Nor was he fortunate in his instrument. Glamorgan, as the king often complained, wanted judgment. Yet Charles, in consideration either of his father's services or of his own zeal, was rash enough to entrust him with extraordinary powers; to make him generalissimo of three armies; to make him admiral, with the nomination of his officers; to enable him to raise money by selling his majesty's wood, customs, and prerogatives;—nay, what was most extraordinary, Charles is declared to have given Glamorgan the power to create from the rank of a baronet to a marquess. The instruments upon which such a commission was founded are stated, however, to have been forged. Yet Charles's best friends seem to have acknowledged indirectly their authenticity. "I care not," writes Lord Clarendon, then Sir Edward Hyde, "how little I say in that business of Ireland, since those strange powers and instructions given to your favourite Glamorgan, which appear to me inexcusable to justice, piety, and prudence."

One plea is made for these alleged acts of insanity on the part of the monarch. He had resolved to

bestow his young daughter, Elizabeth, then a child, on Glamorgan. "It was time," shrewdly observes Walpole, "to adopt him into his family, when he has into his sovereignty." This singular infatuation affords the only instance in English history of similar powers being given to a subject.

After the Restoration this patent was restored to the House of Peers. Glamorgan, during his latter days, sank into a philosophic repose. Of his famous work, the "Century of Inventions," many differing opinions have been given. The very name of this work is whimsical, and yet not unattractive: "A Century of the Names and Scantlings of such Inventions as, at present, I can call to mind, to have Tried and Perfected, which (my former Notes being lost) I have, at the instance of a powerful Friend, endeavoured now, in the Year 1655, to set these down in such a way as may sufficiently Instruct me to put any of them in Practice: *Artis et Naturæ proles.*"

The work, which was very small in compass, was dedicated to Charles II.; and the marquess states that he had performed many of the experiments mentioned in it in the presence of Charles I. The "Century of Scantlings" was, indeed, but as the index to another and a greater work, in which the marquess intended to give minute directions to compass what some have conceived to be the "impossibilities," of which he gave the catalogue; but death interfered. Amongst a mass of what (with all my love for the royalist Somersets, with all my love for a lettered and scientific aristo-

cracy) one must deem chimerical, one great scantling appears; to humble, as it may seem, the reason which refuses to contemplate any thing as impossible. His last scantling was a "stupendous waterwork." This he justly considered as the crown of all his labours; and so was it, for it was the first suggestion of the power of steam — that mighty influence, of the extent of which even the sanguine marquess could never have dreamed, though he seems to have dreamed of every imaginable, and even of every unimaginable thing, in heaven or earth.

Yet he prized this scantling highly. He procured an Act of Parliament to be passed, enabling him and his heirs, for ninety-nine years, to receive all the profits and benefits arising from this invention, allotting to King Charles, and his successors, one-tenth part only; and so sanguine was he, and so exclusive was his patent, that those who counterfeited this water-commanding machine (that is, steam-engine) were to forfeit five pounds for every hour that they should use it without the licence of the Marquess of Worcester or his assignees.

To the honour of the invention of the steam-engine, the Marquess of Worcester, therefore, has a strong claim. Yet it has been disputed, and the credit of this grand discovery must be distributed among many. The earliest steam-engine was, however, undoubtedly used by the Marquess of Worcester — the whimsical, *jesuited* Glamorgan. It was in his time, and for many years afterwards, merely a pump for raising water; a partial vacuum was formed in close vessels by the condensation of steam within them, the atmospheric

pressure raised the water to a certain height, whence it was forced higher by the elasticity of the steam.

This grand discovery was preceded by some at which it is impossible to help smiling. "Seals abundantly significant; how 10,000 persons may use these seals to all and every of the purposes aforesaid, and yet keep their secrets from any except whom they please." Such is one. A moveable fortification another. Again, a rising bulwark; an approaching fluid; a needle alphabet; a knotted string alphabet; a pinched-glove alphabet; a sieve alphabet; a lantern alphabet. Again, to make a key of a chamber-door a perfect pistol; a tinder-box pistol; a screwed ascent instead of stairs. Heaven and earth! What a house the marquess's must have been, when there was a snare in a tinder-box, and a stair which might be screwed up and screwed down at pleasure! Awful, indeed, were his projects! — An advantageous change of centres; a mysterious but not comfortable sort of suggestion; an often discharging pistol or carabine; a discourse woven in tape or riband (rather dry); a total locking of cabinet boxes (possibly the Chubb key of us moderns); an untooksome pear; a prisoning chair (I am glad I was not the Marchioness of Worcester); a brass mould to cast candles, whereby a man may make five hundred a-day. (Did he ever try that in the chambers of Ragland?) Again, and this is really awful, "How to make a brazen or stone head, in the midst of a field or garden, so artificial and natural, that, though a man speak never so softly, and even whisper in the ear thereof, it will presently open his

mouth, and resolve the question in French, Latin, Welsh, Irish, or English." Imagine such a monster stuck in the centre of one's rural perambulations. Can Mrs. Shelley have taken her powerful novel of "Frankenstein" from this scantling of the subtle yet enthusiastic Glamorgan? As if, however, to appease society, several minor inventions are suggested, calculated to cheer the domestic circle; namely, how to talk in colours; a knife, spoon, or fork conveyance; and lastly, though not least, a continually-going watch.

Mechanics was, be it remembered, one of the favourite pursuits of the monarch. One may conceive Charles, who delighted in a ring watch which he wore, made by Elias Waub, to have solaced many an anxious hour talking with Glamorgan of his "scantlings," perhaps on the terrace at Ragland; whilst the Roman emperors, whose busts graced that fine promenade, looked grimly from their niches. Behold Charles and his lettered subject crossing the platform which united the fountain-court and the terrace, the monarch serene, thoughtful, a little credulous, a little facile, the very *beau idéal* of the royal dilettante! There he passes on, in his doublet of satin, his loose sleeves slashed with white, but united here and there by a clasp of jewels. His collar, of the finest lace; and his cloak, dangling gracefully from one shoulder, is of that rich, celestial blue, which, at his installation, the monarch had reinstated as the proper colour of the Knights of the Garter. His long breeches, fringed at their extremities, meet the tops of his wide boots, ruffled with lace. On his head the king

wears a broad, Flemish, beaver hat, with a hatband of costly jewellery, and a plume of feathers. How gallantly he has placed it on the one side of his head! and how that pink pearl in his ear — for his only blemish was wearing earrings — glistens in the summer's sun! How majestic, yet how gentle, is his walk! How fixed and pensive his eye! How supremely elegant his address! He speaks to his subject with the courtesy of a gentleman, blended with the conscious dignity of a monarch.

Glamorgan is otherwise attired, for he is fresh from military service in the Welsh marshes; he has been keeping the country in a state of defence. He is contemplating his journey to the coast; he has settled his terms about Ireland, and is now merely amusing the leisure of his sovereign. He wears a buff-coat, not without embroidery, and fastened around his waist by a dark-blue silk scarf, tied on one side in a large bow. He has a long buff glove on his left hand, the other is ungloved; and as he demonstrates in action to the king his propositions, his fingers appear stained with his various decoctions from yon remote laboratory. Glamorgan has the high features of the Somersets, with a somewhat sinister expression in them. He wears no peaked beard, no small, upturned moustachios; but his hair is long, and dangles over his thick, hard throat. His hat he holds in his hand, and walks uncovered.

There they go, whilst all around of that fair country is as yet in deep repose. Above their heads rises the yellow tower of Gwent, seen and feared far and near. Alas! how long? As the king listens, he smiles;

sometimes with incredulity, sometimes in approval; for amidst much whimsicality, sundry chimeras, and the ebullitions of a sanguine spirit, the monarch discerned the workings of a mind of strong powers, and traced the evidence of great mathematical knowledge. Such, at least, is the known opinion of modern judges.

The dedication to this little work of Glamorgan, was, to use Mr. Seward's expression, "nobly" worded: "Whatsoever God blesseth me with to contribute towards the increase of the revenue in any way, I desire it may be employed to the use of the people; that is, for the taking off such burdens and taxes from them that they chiefly groan under." And then, the way in which the marquess introduces his water-commanding engine is not without a certain force and eloquence: "By Divine Providence and heavenly inspiration, this is my stupendous water-commanding engine, boundless for height and quantity."

The marquess's "intentions [of expenditure] were," he declares, "to the out-go of six or seven hundred pounds already sacrificed, if countenanced and encouraged by you," the parliament; ingenuously confessing, that "the melancholy which had lately seized upon him had extended more advantages to the public service than modesty would permit him to suffer."

Does any one doubt it? Let him remember that the famous Bishop Wilkins was a disciple of Glamorgan's, and be silent. Wilkins was, according to Anthony à Wood, not only a "curious critic in several matters, but an excellent mathematician and experi-

mentalist, and one as well seen in mechanisms and new philosophy, of which he was as great a promoter as any of his time."

Wilkins was the son of a goldsmith, and came of a Nonconformist family; but his being chaplain of several noble families may, perhaps, at first, have tinged his youthful opinions with *Conservative* views — I know not how else to describe them. On the breaking out of the civil wars he became, however, a party to the Solemn League and Covenant; and one may presume Glamorgan's friendship and his to have died away. But one need not be too certain, for Glamorgan's motto was not "Consistency." Wilkins's "Discovery of a New World;" his notions of another habitable world in the moon, "with a discourse on the possibility of a passage thither;" resemble too much the whimsicalities of Glamorgan not to have rendered them kindred spirits. Wilkins, during the Commonwealth, held the office of Master of Trinity College, Cambridge, from which he was ejected at the Restoration. But nothing could impede, eventually, the elevation of such a man. He was able to regain court favour, and was promoted to the see of Norwich. To prove that the Marquess of Worcester was not the only chimerical writer on philosophical subjects in his day, it is only necessary to give the titles of some of Bishop Wilkins's works. Independent of his famous flying-machine, he published a discourse entitled, "Mercury; or, the Secret and Swift Messenger: showing how a Man may, with Privacy and Speed, communicate his Thoughts to a Friend at any Distance." Or, again,

"Hints upon Telegraphic Communication; a Suggestion for a Language that may consist only of Tunes and Musical Notes, without any articulate Word." But his powerful mind was not solely engaged in these playthings of the scientific; and his discourses, "Concerning the Gift of Prayer," and "Of the Principles and Duties of Natural Religion," have proved valuable legacies to posterity.

Such was the disciple of the Marquess of Worcester. But I must hasten from this digression to the fate of Ragland.

Greatly and peaceably did Henry, Marquess of Worcester, live in his castle, whilst the events which desolated England saddened his noble heart. His fortune, his safety, his all were embarked in the royal cause. He spent immense sums in that struggle which impoverished many of the noblest families in this country, and which, as far as architectural beauty is concerned, she has never recovered. But Ragland was still intact. After the battle of Naseby, Charles, upon leaving Oxford, visited his faithful servant, the now aged Marquess of Worcester. He was received with princely splendour; and at Ragland he enjoyed, for the last time, all the respect due to his rank. At Ragland he found a secure retreat; in the marquess, a true and noble-hearted friend and monitor. For the marquess had all the best part of that philosophy which preserved not his son from a crooked and destructive policy; and had Charles adhered to his maxims, much might have been retrieved, much prevented. Great was the reply when

the monarch thanked his subject for certain loans of money: "Sir, I had your word for the money, but I never thought I should have been so soon repaid; for now I have your thanks I have all I look for."

When Charles made his first entrance into the castle, the marquess awaited him at the gates, where he delivered to his majesty the keys, according to custom. The king returned them; whereupon the marquess said, "I beseech your majesty to keep them, if you please, for they are in a good hand; but I am afraid that, ere it be long, I shall be forced to deliver them into the hands of those who will spoil the compliment." In spite of this presage, the three weeks passed by Charles at Ragland were spent in cheerful exertions on the part of his host to divert his sovereign's attention from the melancholy prospects of his cause. Charles was patient and placid. He spent, as Herbert informs us, two or three hours of every day in reading, or other pious exercises; sometimes, for recreation, or health's sake, played at bowls; after meals, "indulge in a quiet game of chess." During the Sundays, he sequestered himself in his devotions.

Amongst other occupations was that of controversy. The marquess had become a convert to the Roman Catholic faith, and he cherished in his family the famous Dr. Bayley, son of the author of the "Practice of Piety." This person had not at that time embraced the Catholic faith, but he was a witness of the conferences on religion held in Ragland between the lord of the castle and the sovereign. Three years after the

fall of Ragland, Dr. Bayley published a work called, "Certamen Religiosum; or, a Conference between King Charles the First and Henry late Marquess of Worcester, concerning Religion, in Ragland Castle, 1646." This work excited virulent animadversions, and Dr. Bayley was accused of having put his own fiction for truth. The conference, certain writers declared, had nothing of the king's style in it. But Bayley showered down abuse on Heylin, who was the assailant; and, to prove that the monarch was capable to maintain such a controversy, he published the little book called, "Golden Apophthegms of King Charles I. and Henry Marquess of Worcester," a work which has received several different titles.

Such a guest as Charles I. must have, indeed, rendered Ragland a paradise, but a transient one. However, the old marquess resolved to make it a place of improvement to the king. He determined to let his majesty know some of his faults. One day, after dinner, when the king was wont to pay his host a visit, he found him with a book of poems lying on the table, the works of John Gower. The king, casting his eyes on the book, observed that he had never seen those poems before.

"Oh," cried the marquess, "it is a book of books! and if your majesty had read them, it would have made you a king of kings."

"And how?" asked the mild and gracious Charles. "Why so, my lord?"

"Why," said the marquess, "herein is set down how

Aristotle brought up and instructed Alexander the Great in all the rudiments and principles belonging to a prince."

And thus saying, the venerable marquess proceeded to read out of the book a lesson on kingly duties, which amazed and terrified the courtiers who were present.

But Charles received the admonition with his usual good breeding. He thought, indeed, that the marquess was going beyond the text of the author, and adding some admonitions of his own; and he put a question to that effect to the marquess.

"Have you, my lord," said the monarch, "got your lesson by heart, or do you speak out of the book?"

"Sir," replied the old man, "if you could read my heart, maybe you would find it there; or, if your majesty please to get it by heart, I will lend you my book:" a touching and remarkable answer from one who had sacrificed so much.

Charles then requested to borrow the book.

"Nay," said the marquess, "I will lend it to you on these conditions: namely, first, that you read it; secondly, that you make use of it."

Meantime the courtiers stood by biting their thumbs, and fretting and fuming at the marquess's freedoms. He took the hint, and gave them no quarter.

"Sir," cried he, "notwithstanding all this, Aristotle, I can assure your majesty, is greatly in favour of absolute power. Permit me to take the book from your majesty's hands, and I will show your majesty one remarkable passage to that purpose,—

"A king can kill, a king can save,
A king can make a lord or knave,
And of a knave a lord also;"

upon which several new-made lords slunk away out of the room.

"My lord," said Charles, observing their departure, "if you go on in this way, you will drive away all my nobility."

"Sir," replied the marquess, "I protest unto your majesty I am as new-made a lord as any one of them; yet I was never called so often rogue or knave in my life as since I have received this honour, and why should not they bear their share?"

The book of Gower's, from which the Marquess of Worcester read this lesson to his sovereign, was the "Confessio Amantis." Two things may be remarked on this anecdote: first, the sincerity of the old peer; secondly, the obvious change in Charles's high notions of kingly prerogative and dignity. The fact is, that Charles was a very different man in his outset into life and towards its close. In the first he was rash, and therefore weak; for the rash must ever retrace their steps. He was imbued with notions which the country has never tolerated, except in the Tudors—their native monarchs, as they considered them. The language of truth was never acceptable to him, until bitter adversity had shown him that his only faithful friends were those who dared to speak it. Never, perhaps, did a monarch and a subject meet upon such terms. They separated, to meet no more. Charles returned to his

desperate career; the marquess fortified his castle more strongly to meet the coming storm.

It was now found necessary to withdraw the two armies which the marquess had lately supported from the county of Monmouth generally, and to concentrate their force within Ragland. On the 3rd of June, 1646, the castle was summoned to surrender by Colonel Morgan, who commanded the Parliamentarian forces in that district. Previously to this summons, the fortress had been invested by a corps under Sir Trevor Williams, the very man whose life Charles had spared. But at length, after several ineffectual summonses, Sir Thomas Fairfax came himself from Bath to commence the siege. The Marquess of Worcester was at this critical moment at some distance from his castle, and in the Welsh mountains. He was warned of the approach of the enemy by Dr. Bayley, and was enabled to make a timely preparation for defence.

Early in August, 1646, the host of Fairfax was seen approaching. The character of the general, whose fate it was to lower some of the noblest edifices in England, was not tainted with the harshness of Cromwell nor the cruelty of Ireton. Fairfax was brave—truly brave; and as humane as a party-man might be,—

> "Both sex's virtues were in him combined;
> He had the fierceness of the manliest mind,
> And all the meekness too of woman kind.
> He never knew what envy was, nor hate;
> His soul was filled with worth and honesty,
> And with another thing, quite out of date,
> Called modesty."

Thus runs his epitaph by Villiers, Duke of Buckingham. Fairfax was, in truth, one of the many who, engaged in that desperate cause, had not his heart in it. "He wished nothing that Cromwell did, and yet contributed to bring it all to pass." Thus wrote Clarendon of him; but Fairfax has left his own testimony to his remorse for much of what he had promoted. After alluding to the languishing state of the parliament, and to the means contemplated of restoring it to its ancient vigour, he says,—"This way being by the sword, the trial of the king was the easier for them to accomplish. My afflicted and troubled mind for it, and my earnest endeavours to prevent it, will, I hope, sufficiently testify my dislike and abhorrence of the fact."

Such a man was not likely to lower the walls and towers of Ragland from wanton revenge; and Fairfax did what he did reluctantly. For he loved old memories. He loved literature. When Oxford was taken, he spared her libraries; for which, blessings on his name. He even enriched the Bodleian with many manuscripts.

To these laudable tastes was united a modesty remarkable in "one born for victory." That as his son-in-law, Buckingham, affirmed of him, Fairfax "never seemed impudent but in the field," was much to say in those days, when the vulgarity of the Parliamentarian leaders was not their least reproach. To this modest demeanour, a natural impediment in his speech may have contributed; nor was Fairfax, independent of that circumstance, gifted with eloquence;

rhetoric was not his *forte*—the plain, but brave soldier—the vacillating politician—by birth, it is said, of Royalist principles; in heart, but half a convert to the great thraldom which he served. Such was Fairfax; and it may not seem idle to add, that he retained the bearing of a Royalist, allowed his hair to flow about his shoulders, and conducted himself, even to the vanquished, like a gentleman. And yet, to him we owe the destruction of some of the finest properties in England. So he presented himself before Ragland; for, to use words which I shall afterwards have to rehearse, he had now nearly finished his work all over the kingdom, and there was nothing left but this castle to reduce.

To do Fairfax justice, he seems long to have withheld the destructive power which had caused such havoc elsewhere. Long did he forbear to shatter those noble towers, before which trenches were dug and cannon planted ere he appeared before them. As the tower of Gwent, now desolate, yet still majestic, rose in its untouched perfection before him, to *his* mind there occurred none of that arrogant, and, perhaps, vindictive pride, which afforded to some of the Parliamentarians such a keen delight in levelling those of ancient blood; for Fairfax was himself of gentle birth, and, although not a Plantagenet, was no mean upstart in the new and changing scene which produced so many domestic convulsions, so many changes and chances in this country.

As he gazed, however, on these towers, he may

naturally have prognosticated the ruin and downfall of the noble race who dwelt there. Chepstow, their other proud possession, the key of South Wales, as it was called, had been several times taken and retaken, but had eventually fallen into the hands of the Parliamentarians—a triumph, for which the bearer of the news of its surrender had been rewarded with a gift of fifty pounds, so important was its recapture considered. The princely fortune of the Marquess of Worcester was already greatly impaired. He was old, and his son, Lord Glamorgan, was distrusted by all parties. The downfall of the Somersets might, therefore, be predicted; and, perhaps, with a sigh, Fairfax reflected as he rode from Wallingford towards the hundred of Ragland, that he was casting the last stone which should level an ancient house. Yet, how was it? Was it so? Ragland, indeed, is in ruins, but the Somersets flourish; and other possessions, as fair, but not so proud, attest their greatness. So far he was mistaken. But may he not reasonably, too, have inferred, that in all his captures of towns, in reduction of houses, in the matrimonial connexions of his daughters (one of whom married the second Duke of Buckingham), he was nursing a family for future generations to look up to, and fixing a peerage on the legislature of his country? And was it so? No. The name of Fairfax is no longer noble amongst us (neither, indeed, is that of Cromwell); and it is singular that the family of Fairfax is, or was, represented by a descendant who fol-

lowed the occupation of a miller in the rural village of Barford; near Warwick.

As a conqueror, however, Fairfax approached the castle. Already had it been shaken by the artillery of the Parliamentarian forces; but only shaken; and scarcely even had its strong walls trembled before the attack.

Major-general Langhorne had assailed it; but several gallant sallies had been made by the garrison; and in one of these a cornet of Morgan's regiment was killed, and the colours were taken. After the reduction of Oxford, Morgan, however, being reinforced with 2000 men, sent in a summons to the castle to surrender, with all its ammunition, assuring the marquess that General Fairfax "had now finished his work all over the kingdom, except this castle, and that there was no chance of relief."

The marquess replied to this message in the courteous language of his day, and begged to be allowed to suspend his belief as to the surrender of all places of defence, and decided to give as his answer, "that he rather chose (if it so pleased God) to die nobly than to live with infamy."

The siege was, therefore, far advanced, both in the works and the approaches, when General Fairfax himself arrived in person, and sent a summons to the castle to surrender immediately.

The answer to this was dated from "my poor cottage at Raglan," and was truly characteristic of its writer: — "I am loth," thus was the despatch penned, "to give

up the only house left me to cover my head, but, at the same time, I am unwilling to be the cause of our ruin." He desired time, therefore, to communicate with his majesty; adding, at the same time, as a plea for his defence, that the castle "of Raglan" was his own house.

The desired communication with the king was refused by General Fairfax, as it had been to every one else in similar circumstances. The marquess then wrote the following conciliatory and touching letter to his powerful adversary. It is impossible to render it in any words better than his own — more simple, more expressive: —

"I do confide in your honour," thus it begins, "that being at stake (concerning leave to send to his majesty), I will at this time forbear," added the marquess, "to make further mention of it; only one thing, which is extraordinary, I offer to your consideration for the just cause, besides my allegiance, of my reasonable request."

In this conciliatory manner did he address General Fairfax. The plea which he thus offered was, "That he was 20,000*l.* out of purse on the king's account, and if he were to do anything displeasing to his sovereign that would certainly be lost; and," added the old marquess humorously, "no benefit to the Parliament."

A dash of prudence as well as of courtesy was mingled with the old marquess's valour. "If you knew," he writes, "how well known I was in Henry Earl of Huntingdon's time, unto your noble grandfather at York, I am assured that I should receive the favour at your hands that safely you might afford. God knows

that if I might quietly receive every means of subsistence, and be in security with the Parliament's approbation, and freed from the malice of those gentlemen that are of the committee in this county, I should quickly quit myself of the garrison, for I have no great cause to take delight in it." Thus spoke the half-ruined, but still unwearied adherent. "I have that high esteem," adds the high-bred nobleman, "of your worth, nobleness, and true judgment, that, knowing you will offer nothing ignoble or unworthy for me to do, as the case stands with me, I desire to know what conditions I may have, and I will return you present answer."

The reply of Fairfax was dry and cold. It was, however, candid. He pointed out the impossibility, in case of a surrender, of restraining the rude soldiery from plunder. "Touching your lordship's 20,000*l.*," he added (with little good taste), "your lordship had liberty to solicit about that by the same hands that your lordship shall give an account of the surrender to his majesty. I desire your lordship, on receipt of this, to dismiss my trumpeter, and to send an answer by one of your own."

All this time the host of Fairfax were encamped around the castle; the rich farms supplied them; the fine forests teemed with them; the gentle slopes gave them space whereon to plant their batteries. Alas!

It was some time before the marquess replied to this epistle. Meantime the siege went on; and during the progress of these negotiations the castle was battered, and the work of destruction began. At length, on the

11th of August, the marquess again wrote. He referred his delay in giving a positive answer to Fairfax to the indecision of his officers, who could not bring their minds to capitulate; "but as soon as I shall obtain their consent to your conditions, you shall not be long without it." Then he asked him this searching question, "Whether, in case of the terms being acceded to, he should be left to the mercy of Parliament for alteration at their will and pleasure? If it be so," said the unhappy old man, "I shall endeavour to study more about it." Alas! he dreaded a long imprisonment, or still more, the death of the scaffold, at which even the stoutest hearts might tremble: still more, the ruin of his numerous family, and the utter confiscation of all his estates.

Many a dire precedent was there to justify his apprehensions; and the marquess quotes, in particular, one which had recently occurred. "For example, my Lord Shrewsbury's case, and divers others; how conditions have been broken, doth a little affright me. I know by your will and consent it should never be (noble, confiding old man!); but soldiers are unruly, and the Parliament unquestionable, and, therefore, I beseech you pardon my just cause of fear; and I will rest your humble servant, — WORCESTER."

To this Fairfax replied, that he could only give him this resolution, — "That what *I* grant," such were his words, "*I* will undertake to be made good. The actors in the Earl of Shrewsbury's case, who were none of my army, have received their censure, and by this,

I believe, the execution. But here, if any conclusion be made while I stay, I dare undertake there shall be no such thing; if any, there shall be reparation.—THOMAS FAIRFAX."

No "humble servant," as from his opponent; but such was the temper of the times, such the difference between Cavalier and Roundhead. "Reparation!" as if there could be reparation for the towers of Ragland! For its ramparts, and its courts, and its arches, its twelve Cæsars — reparation! All the wealth of a long line of a subsequent ancestry has not attempted it. Was it money at which Fairfax hinted when he wrote that word? Could money restore a race of Plantagenets? Could it build up an old house? Can it add one cubit to a man's stature, or give antiquity to newness?

All this time the merciless cannon were playing on those destined walls, and one by one its boasts were humbled, its garrison was reduced. The next note of the old marquess seems, to our informed minds, to be penned in a tone of humility and dejection.

"For the better accommodation of these unhappy differences," he writes on the 13th of August, six days before the surrender, "if so please that there be a cessation of arms and working, and to engage your honour for the return of my commissioners, to-morrow, by ten o'clock of the day, they shall wait upon you in your leaguer, where they shall vindicate me from being the only obstruction of the general peace."

This letter, requiring a "sudden answer," was despatched to Fairfax.

That general saw his advantage. His reply was lofty, and doomed some more of the ramparts, other fair turrets of the castle, to fall. Not having as yet received from the marquess a direct reply to the conditions sent, Fairfax had no grounds for a cessation of arms and working. He condescended, however, to say, that as commissioners to treat were to be with him at *ten* the next morning, that from *nine* of the clock on that morning, till two in the afternoon, there should be a cessation. And this gracious reply concluded, as usual, after the new mode, "Yours, T. FAIRFAX."

The rejoinder of the marquess was now lofty. He drew up before the cold Parliamentarian, and his Plantagenet blood boiled within him. To avoid delays, which he thought General Fairfax's side would best rife of, he had proposed to send commissioners. He now, however, sent him at once his propositions touching the surrender, but not through more mediators. "I would have been glad," added the marquess, "that you had heard the just reasons thereof, to the end that you might not have been persuaded to slight them without just cause."

To this Fairfax replied, "That he had perused his propositions, and found them such as deserved no answer. He had offered, as he stated, the best conditions to his lordship that he yet might have, if he decided *in time*. Should there be anything obscure in them, he should be willing to appoint commissioners to treat;

but no alteration in the terms must be expected, and an answer by six in the evening was required."

The marquess sent no reply. For three days more the siege went on, one bulwark after another was levelled; one after another of the brave garrison fell slain from its walls. With what sorrow must that tender heart have viewed all this, and have known that it was ineffectual! Still a want of trust in the enemy, still a prophetic fear of the conditions being broken, kept the brave old man at his post. That he ever left it, that he did not remain planted in the castle, was afterwards a source of bitter regret.

One son only, of all his numerous family, was with him at this moment; perhaps, for his sake, the marquess dreaded lest the fortress should be carried by storm. He therefore began to relent, and to think of trusting to the mercy of Parliament—a cruel alternative.

For ten long weeks had he defied that power which had already reduced every castle except his own in England; but human force could do no more. His enemy was deemed honourable, and the marquess resolved to trust him, and to treat with him for terms of capitulation. On the 19th of August Ragland was surrendered. The terms were fair, and seemed merciful; and the brave lord of the castle believed that they would be maintained.

What a day that must have been on which, marching at the head of his garrison, the marquess quitted this home of his youth, and haven of his old age, for ever!

But not in the style of the vanquished did they quit the castle. The marquess had stipulated, that at least appearances should be saved. The garrison marched out, therefore, with their horses and arms, the colours flying and drums beating, trumpets sounding, matches lighted at both ends, bullets in their mouths, and every soldier with twelve charges of powder, match and bullet proportionable, and bag and baggage, free to go to any place within ten miles of the garrison, where the general shall appoint.

So far the conditions were observed. "What I engage I shall make good," said Fairfax; and, to a certain extent, he did so. The marquess departed, bidding

> "Adieu to those scenes,
> Where the broken landscape, by degrees
> Ascending, you pass into rigid hills;
> O'er which, the Cambrian mountains, like far clouds,
> That skirt the blue horizon, dusky rise."

His sixth son, Lord Charles Somerset, supported him. His friend Dr. Bayley, who now acted as his chaplain, was there to aid him by his counsels. Sir Philip and Lady Jones, and Commissary Gwilt, are the only other persons mentioned as forming this melancholy procession besides the garrison, consisting of 4 colonels, 82 captains, 16 lieutenants, 6 cornets, 4 ensigns, 4 quartermasters, 52 gentlemen and esquires, and about 700 common men.

With a sad foreboding were the keys of the castle given up to Fairfax, the colours lowered, and the arms surrendered; for the brave marquess had all along sus-

pected that the Parliament would not ratify the terms of capitulation; and he was right. He had been too noble, too important, too formidable, to meet with the smallest portion of that good faith which was now so rare on the Parliamentarian side. It was, indeed, impossible to calculate what his generous loyalty *had* done, nor what it might, supposing he escaped, still effect. He lived not long, indeed, after the capitulation of Ragland; but he lived long enough to lament bitterly that he had thrown himself on the mercy of Parliament. On his arrival in London he was accused of having violated the articles of surrender, and was committed to the custody of the Black Rod. In this new misfortune his ready humour did not desert him. "I had rather be under the black rod than under a black cloud," was his remark. On finding that he was to be lodged in Covent Garden, where the Usher of the Black Rod lived, he said to Dr. Bayley, "What do you and the company here present, think of fortune-tellers?" The answer was, "That some of them spoke shrewdly." Upon which the marquess said,—"It was told me before I ever was a Catholic, that I should die in a convent, but I never believed them till now. I hope they will not bury me in a garden."

In his serious moments, however, the marquess looked back upon the events of the last few weeks with poignant regret. "Ah, Dr. Bayley!" he said (this was a few hours before his death), "if I had made use of the articles which you procured for me, I had not now been so near the end of my life and the beginning

of my happiness. I forsook life, liberty, and estate, and threw myself upon their mercy; which, when I had done, if to seize upon all my goods, to pull down my house, to sell my estate, and to send up for such a weak body as mine, enfeebled by disease, in the dead of winter, and in the winter of mine age, be merciful, what are they whose mercies are so cruel? Neither do I expect that they will stop at all this; for I fear that they will persecute me after my death." He was now fast declining, and his sorrows were soon to cease. He was consoled by the announcement that the Parliament would permit him to be buried in his family vault at Windsor. "Why, God bless us all!" cried the dying man; "why then I shall have a better castle when I am dead, than they took from me when living!"

At last, his worn-out frame, sustained only by his elastic spirit, sank to rest. A purer and nobler spirit never was there surrendered to its Creator. Humble, resigned, not vexing the hearts of those around him by repining, fulfilling in life every duty, looking meekly for his reward hereafter, and murmuring not that his path here had been one of difficulty and of trial, this great, good man expired.

He was succeeded by his son, Lord Glamorgan, whose career was more fortunate. Yet we find by an entry in the Tower records, that he too incurred the jealousy of Parliament, and endured a temporary imprisonment in the Tower, from which, however, he was soon released; and the race henceforth prospered, save when the heir of Henry, third marquess of, and

first Duke of Beaufort, died, in 1698, from the effects of a fall in jumping out of his carriage. And still the family retained their fond allegiance to the Stuarts,—the first Duke of Beaufort refusing to take the oaths of allegiance to William and Mary, and living, therefore, in retirement.

But Ragland received them no more. About a mile from Monmouth stands, upon the banks of the Trotby an ancient seat of the Herberts, and now of the Somersets. The name is corrupted from Trotby into Troy; and in the days of Charles I. there dwelt there a brother of the great Marquess of Worcester. Sir Thomas being, as the story goes, a complete gentleman, delighted in fine gardens and orchards, where by the benefit of art the earth was made so grateful to him, that he was enabled to make his majesty a present, which, the times and seasons considered, was able to make the king believe that the sovereign of the Manets had now changed the poles,—that Wales (the refuse and outcast of the fair garden of Ragland) had fairer and riper fruit than England's bowels had on all her beds. This was an extraordinary dish of fruit, which was given to the Marquess of Worcester to present; nor would the old marquess permit it to be offered by any hand but his own.

"Sir," said he, placing his dishes on the table, "I present you with that which came not from Lincoln that was, nor from London that is, nor York that is to be, but from Troy."

At which the king smiled, and answered wittily,—

"Truly, my lord, I have heard that corn grows where Troy town stood, but I never thought that there had grown any apricots before."

But the gardens of Troy were famous, even before the days of the Somersets; and so early as the days of Henry VIII., when an enterprising Herbert, who possessed then the place, despatched two men to France and Flanders, to study horticulture for the improvement of Troy. Of the Old House, only an old gateway with a pointed arch remains; and the present abode of the Somersets, in their almost territorial county of Monmouth, is the fabric of Inigo Jones.

In this, placed in commodious rather than stately apartments, figure a series of family portraits, of a race so distinguished in that contest which brought to light so much of honour and valour, so much of disinterestedness and constancy, from among our great aristocracy, condemned often, deserving of condemnation still oftener, but certainly, during the Great Rebellion, loftier than at any other period of our history.

END OF THE FIRST VOLUME.

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